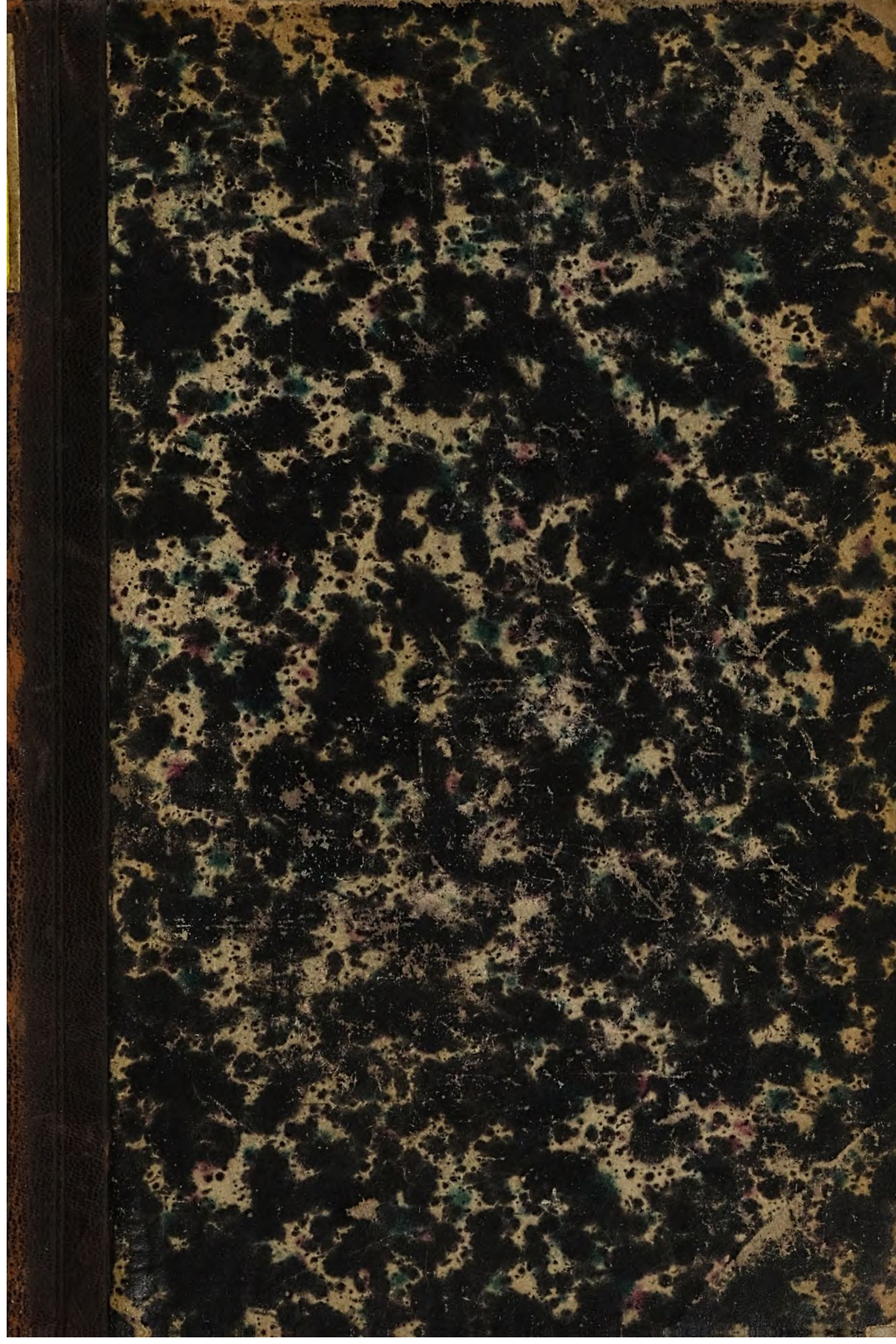
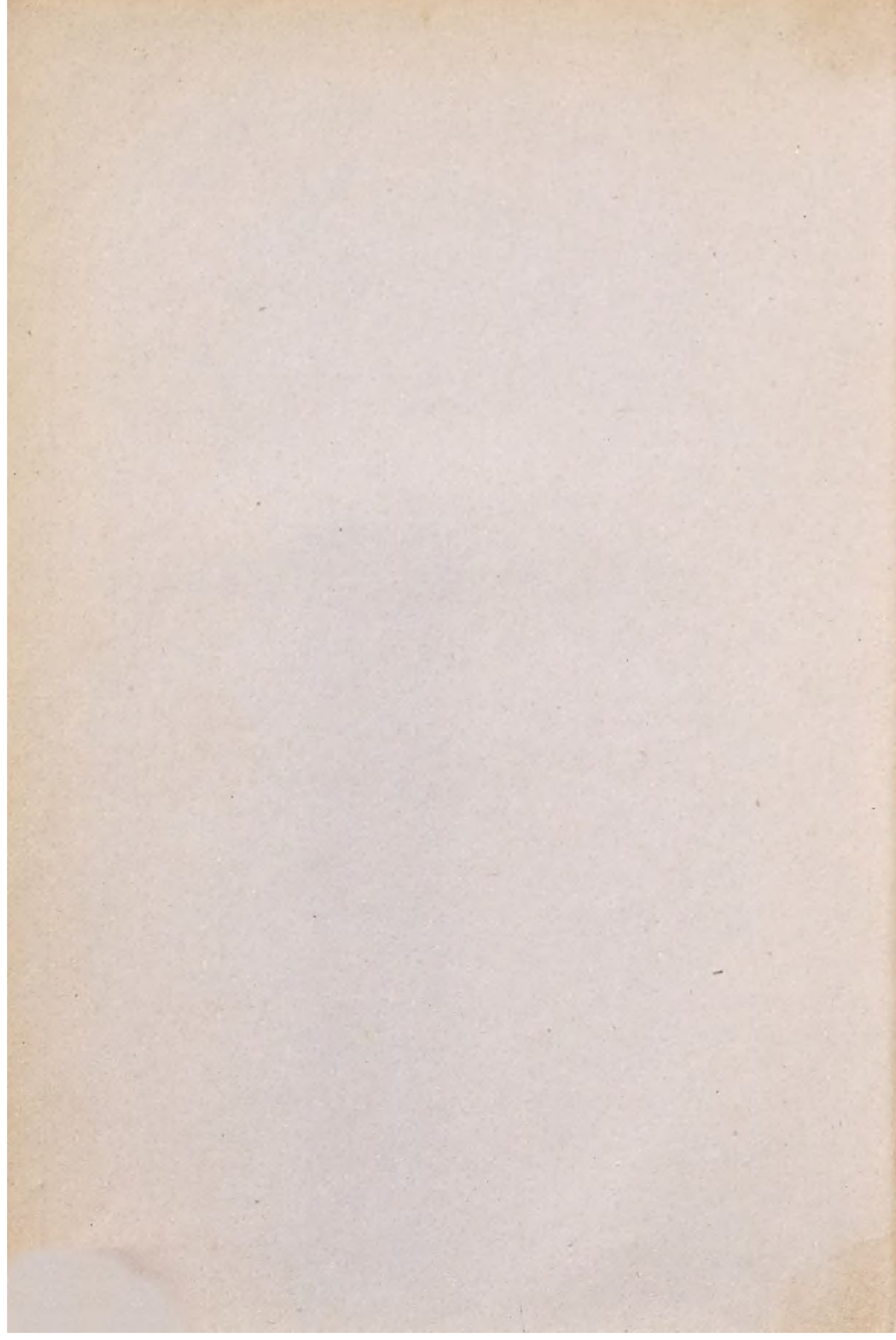




P.O. angl.
93 ^{ma}
912

Dickens



COLLECTION
OF
BRITISH AUTHORS
TAUCHNITZ EDITION.

VOL. 1869.

THE LETTERS OF

Charlotte Keats



COLLECTION

OF

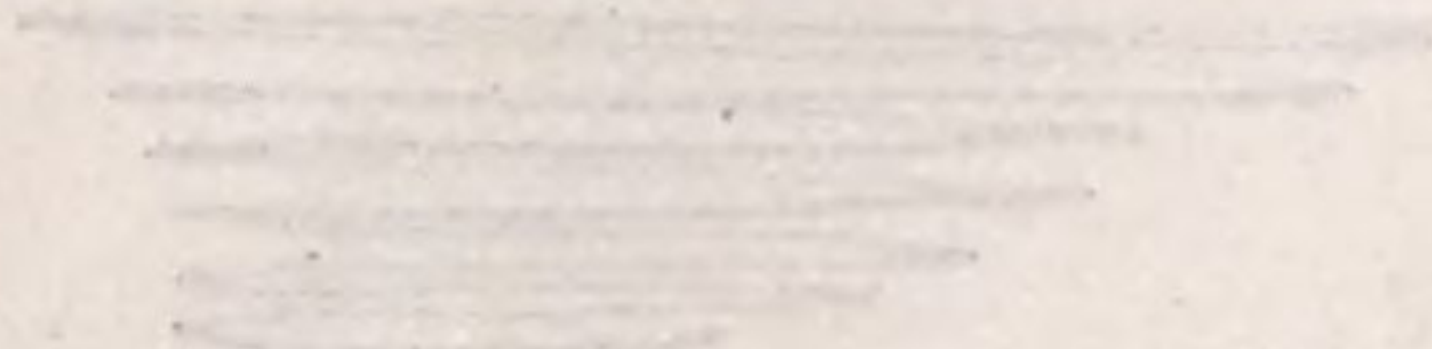
BRITISH AUTHORS

THIRTIETH EDITION

VOL. 1813

THE LETTERS OF

William Pitt



THE LETTERS
OF
CHARLES DICKENS.

EDITED BY
HIS SISTER-IN-LAW AND HIS ELDEST
DAUGHTER.

COPYRIGHT EDITION.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.
1853 TO 1861.

LEIPZIG
BERNHARD TAUCHNITZ
1880.

The Right of Translation is reserved.

THE LETTERS
OF
CHARLES DICKENS

EDITED BY
HIS SON, JOHN DICKENS



THE LETTERS OF
CHARLES DICKENS
EDITED BY
HIS SON, JOHN DICKENS
IN TWO VOLUMES
VOL. I
LONDON
PUBLISHED BY
H. K. BULLOCK & CO. LTD.
15, ABchurch Lane, E.C. 4

BOOK II.—*Continued.*

THE
LETTERS OF CHARLES DICKENS.

1853.

NARRATIVE.

IN this year, Charles Dickens was still writing "Bleak House," and went to Brighton for a short time in the spring. In May he had an attack of illness, a return of an old trouble of an inflammatory pain in the side, which was short but very severe while it lasted. Immediately on his recovery, early in June, a departure from London for the summer was resolved upon. He had decided upon trying Boulogne this year for his holiday sojourn, and as soon as he was strong enough to travel, he, his wife, and sister-in-law went there in advance of the family, taking up their quarters at the Hôtel des Bains, to find a house, which was speedily done. The pretty little Villa des Moulineaux, and its excellent landlord, at once took his fancy, and in that house, and in another on the same ground, also belonging to M. Beaucourt, he passed three very happy summers. And he became as much attached to "Our French Watering Place" as to "Our English" one. Having written a sketch of Broadstairs

under that name in "Household Words," he did the same of Boulogne under the former title.

During the summer, besides his other work, he was employed in dictating "The Child's History of England," which he published in "Household Words," and which was the only book he ever wrote by dictation. But, as at Broadstairs and other seaside homes, he had always plenty of relaxation and enjoyment in the visits of his friends. In September he finished "Bleak House," and in October he started with Mr. Wilkie Collins and Mr. Egg from Boulogne, on an excursion through parts of Switzerland and Italy; his wife and family going home at the same time, and he himself returning to Tavistock House early in December. His eldest son, Charles, had left Eton some time before this, and had gone for the completion of his education to Leipsic. He was to leave Germany at the end of the year, therefore it was arranged that he should meet the travellers in Paris on their homeward journey, and they all returned together.

Just before Christmas he went to Birmingham in fulfilment of an offer which he had made at the dinner given to him at Birmingham on the 6th of January (of which he writes to Mr. Macready in the first letter that follows here), to give two readings from his own books for the benefit of the New Midland Institute. They were his first public readings. He read "The Christmas Carol" on one evening, and "The Cricket on the Hearth" on the next, before enormous audiences. The success was so great, and the sum of money realised for the institute so large, that he consented to give a second reading of "The Christmas Carol," remaining another night in Birmingham for the purpose,

on the condition that seats were reserved, at prices within their means, for the working men. And to his great satisfaction they formed a large proportion, and were among the most enthusiastic and appreciative of his audience. He was accompanied by his wife and sister-in-law, and on this occasion a breakfast was given to him after his last reading, at which a silver flower-basket, duly inscribed, was very gracefully presented to *Mrs.* Charles Dickens.

The letters in this year require little explanation. Those to his wife and sister-in-law and Mr. Wills give a little history of his Italian journey. At Naples he found his excellent friend Sir James Emerson Tennent, with his wife and daughter, with whom he joined company in the ascent of Vesuvius.

The two letters to M. Regnier, the distinguished actor of the Théâtre Français—with whom Charles Dickens had formed a sincere friendship during his first residence in Paris—on the subject of a projected benefit to Miss Kelly, need no further explanation.

Mr. John Delane, editor of *The Times*, and always a highly-esteemed friend of Charles Dickens, had given him an introduction to a school at Boulogne, kept by two English gentlemen, one a clergyman and the other a former Eton master, the Rev. W. Bewsher and Mr. Gibson. He had at various times four boys at this school, and very frequently afterwards he expressed his gratitude to Mr. Delane for having given him the introduction, which turned out so satisfactory in every respect.

The letter of grateful acknowledgment from Mr. Poole and Charles Dickens to Lord Russell was for the pension for which the old dramatic author was in-

debted to that nobleman, and which enabled him to live comfortably until the end of his life.

A note to Mr. Marcus Stone was sent with a copy of "The Child's History of England." The sketch referred to was one of "Jo'," in "Bleak House," which showed great feeling and artistic promise, since fully fulfilled by the young painter, but very remarkable in a boy so young as he was at that time. The letter to Mr. Stanfield, in seafaring language, is a specimen of a playful way in which he frequently addressed that dear friend.

Mr. W. H.
Wills.

"A curiosity from *him*. No date. No signature."—W. H. H.

MY DEAR WILLS,

I have not a shadow of a doubt about Miss Martineau's story. It is certain to tell. I think it very effectively, admirably done; a fine plain purpose in it; quite a singular novelty. For the last story in the Christmas number it will be great. I couldn't wish for a better.

Mrs. Gaskell's ghost story I have got this morning; have not yet read. It is long.

Mr.
Clarkson
Stanfield.

H.M.S. *Tavistock*, January 2nd, 1853.

Yoho, old salt! Neptun' ahoy! Yon don't forget, messmet, as you was to meet Dick Sparkler and Mark Porpuss on the fok'sle of the good ship *Owssel Words*, Wednesday next, half-past four? Not you; for when did Stanfell ever pass his word to go anywheers and not come! Well. Belay, my heart of oak, belay! Come alongside the *Tavistock* same day and hour, 'stead of *Owssel Words*. Hail your shipmets, and they'll drop over the side and join you, like two new

shillings a-droppin' into the purser's pocket. Damn all lubberly boys and swabs, and give *me* the lad with the tarry trousers, which shines to me like di'mings bright!

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Friday Night, Jan. 14th, 1853.* Mr. W. C. Macready.

MY DEAREST MACREADY,

I have been much affected by the receipt of your kindest and best of letters; for I know out of the midst of what anxieties it comes to me, and I appreciate such remembrance from my heart. You and yours are always with us, however. It is no new thing for you to have a part in any scene of my life. It very rarely happens that a day passes without our thoughts and conversation travelling to Sherborne. We are so much there that I cannot tell you how plainly I see you as I write.

I know you would have been full of sympathy and approval if you had been present at Birmingham, and that you would have concurred in the tone I tried to take about the eternal duties of the arts to the people. I took the liberty of putting the court and that kind of thing out of the question, and recognising nothing *but* the arts and the people. The more we see of life and its brevity, and the world and its varieties, the more we know that no exercise of our abilities in any art, but the addressing of it to the great ocean of humanity in which we are drops, and not to by-ponds (very stagnant) here and there, ever can or ever will lay the foundations of an endurable retrospect. Is it not so? *You* should have as much practical information on this subject, now, my dear friend, as any man.

My dearest Macready, I cannot forbear this closing word. I still look forward to our meeting as we used to do in the happy times we have known together, so far as your old hopefulness and energy are concerned. And I think I never in my life have been more glad to receive a sign, than I have been to hail that which I find in your handwriting.

Some of your old friends at Birmingham are full of interest and enquiry. Kate and Georgina send their dearest loves to you, and to Miss Macready, and to all the children. I am ever, and no matter where I am—and quite as much in a crowd as alone—my dearest Macready,

Your affectionate and most attached Friend.

Mrs.
Gaskell.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *May 3rd*, 1853.

MY DEAR MRS. GASKELL,

The subject is certainly NOT too serious, so sensibly treated. I have no doubt that you may do a great deal of good by pursuing it in "Household Words." I thoroughly agree in all you say in your note, have similar reasons for giving it some anxious consideration, and shall be greatly interested in it. Pray decide to do it. Send the papers, as you write them, to me. Meanwhile I will think of a name for them, and bring it to bear upon yours, if I think yours improvable. I am sure you may rely on being widely understood and sympathised with.

Forget that I called those two women my dear friends! Why, if I told you a fiftieth part of what I have thought about them, you would write me the most suspicious of notes, refusing to receive the fiftieth part of that. So I don't write, particularly as you

laid your injunctions on me concerning Ruth. In revenge, I will now mention one word that I wish you would take out whenever you reprint that book. She would never—I am ready to make affidavit before any authority in the land—have called her seducer “Sir,” when they were living at that hotel in Wales. A girl pretending to be what she really was would have done it, but she—never!

Ever most faithfully yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Monday, May 9th, 1853.*

Monsieur
Regnier.

MY DEAR REGNIER,

I meant to have spoken to you last night about a matter in which I hope you can assist me, but I forgot it. I think I must have been quite *bouleversé* by your supposing (as you pretended to do, when you went away) that it was not a great pleasure and delight to me to see you act!

There is a certain Miss Kelly, now sixty-two years old, who was once one of the very best of English actresses, in the greater and better days of the English theatre. She has much need of a benefit, and I am exerting myself to arrange one for her, on about the 9th of June, if possible, at the St. James's Theatre. The first piece will be an entertainment of her own, and she will act in the last. Between these two (and at the best time of the night), it would be a great attraction to the public, and a great proof of friendship to me, if you would act. If we could manage, through your influence and with your assistance, to present a little French vaudeville, such as “*Le bon Homme jadis*,” it would make the night a grand success.

Mitchell's permission, I suppose, would be required. That I will undertake to apply for, if you will tell me that you are willing to help us, and that you could answer for the other necessary actors in the little French piece, whatever the piece might be, that you would choose for the purpose. Pray write me a short note in answer, on this point.

I ought to tell you that the benefit will be "under distinguished patronage." The Duke of Devonshire, the Duke of Leinster, the Duke of Beaufort, etc. etc., are members of the committee with me, and I have no doubt that the audience will be of the *élite*.

I have asked Mr. Chapman to come to me to-morrow, to arrange for the hiring of the theatre. Mr. Harley (a favourite English comedian whom you may know) is our secretary. And if I could assure the committee to-morrow afternoon of your co-operation, I am sure they would be overjoyed.

Votre tout dévoué.

Monsieur
Regnier.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *May 20th*, 1853.

MY DEAR REGNIER,

I am heartily obliged to you for your kind letter respecting Miss Kelly's benefit. It is to take place *on Thursday, the 16th June*; Thursday the 9th (the day originally proposed) being the day of Ascot Races, and therefore a bad one for the purpose.

Mitchell, like a brave *garçon* as he is, most willingly consents to your acting for us. Will you think what little French piece it will be best to do, in order that I may have it ready for the bills?

Ever faithfully yours, my dear Regnier.

BOULOGNE, *Monday, June 13th*, 1853. Mr. W. H. Wills.

MY DEAR WILLS,

You will be glad, I know, to hear that we had a delightful passage yesterday, and that I made a perfect phenomenon of a dinner. It is raining hard to-day, and my back feels the draught; but I am otherwise still mending.

I have signed, sealed, and delivered a contract for a house (once occupied for two years by a man I knew in Switzerland), which is not a large one, but stands in the middle of a great garden, with what the landlord calls a "forest" at the back, and is now surrounded by flowers, vegetables, and all manner of growth. A queer, odd, French place, but extremely well supplied with all table and other conveniences, and strongly recommended.

The address is:

Château des Moulineaux,
Rue Beaurepaire, Boulogne.

There is a coach-house, stabling for half-a-dozen horses, and I don't know what.

We take possession this afternoon, and I am now laying in a good stock of creature comforts. So no more at present from

Yours ever faithfully.

P.S.—Mrs. Dickens and her sister unite in kindest regards.

Mr. W. H.
Wills.

CHATEAU DES MOULINEAUX, BOULOGNE,

Saturday Night, June 18th, 1853.

MY DEAR WILLS,

“BLEAK HOUSE.”

Thank God, I have done half the number with great care, and hope to finish on Thursday or Friday next. O how thankful I feel to be able to have done it, and what a relief to get the number out!

GENERAL MOVEMENTS OF INIMITABLE.

I don't think (I am not sure) I shall come to London until after the completion of “Bleak House,” No. 18—the number after this now in hand—for it strikes me that I am better here at present. I have picked up in the most extraordinary manner, and I believe you would never suppose to look at me that I had had that week or barely an hour of it. If there should be any occasion for our meeting in the meantime, a run over here would do you no harm, and we should be delighted to see you at any time. If you suppose this place to be in a street, you are much mistaken. It is in the country, though not more than ten minutes' walk from the post-office, and is the best doll's-house of many rooms, in the prettiest French grounds, in the most charming situation I have ever seen, the best place I have ever lived in abroad, except at Genoa. You can scarcely imagine the beauty of the air in this richly-wooded hill-side. As to comforts in the house, there are all sorts of things, beginning with no end of the coldest water and running through the most beautiful flowers down to English foot-baths and a Parisian liqueur-stand. Your parcel (frantic enclosures and all)

arrived quite safely last night. This will leave by steamer to-morrow, Sunday evening. There is a boat in the morning, but having no one to send to-night I can't reach it, and to-morrow being Sunday it will come to much the same thing.

I think that's all at present.

Ever, my dear Wills, faithfully yours.

CHATEAU DES MOULINEAUX, RUE BEAUREPAIRE, BOULOGNE,

Thursday, June 23rd, 1853.

Mr. Frank
Stone,
A. R. A.

MY DEAR PUMPION,

I take the earliest opportunity, after finishing my number—ahem!—to write you a line, and to report myself (thank God) brown, well, robust, vigorous, open to fight any man in England of my weight, and growing a mustache. Any person of undoubted pluck, in want of a customer, may hear of me at the bar of Bleak House, where my money is down.

I think there is an abundance of places here that would suit you well enough; and Georgina is ready to launch on voyages of discovery and observation with you. But it is necessary that you should consider for how long a time you want it, as the folks here let much more advantageously for the tenant when they know the term—don't like to let without. It seems to me that the best thing you can do is to get a paper of the South Eastern tidal trains, fix your day for coming over here in five hours (when you will pay through to Boulogne at London Bridge), let me know the day, and come and see how you like the place. *I* like it better than ever. We can give you a bed (two to spare, at a pinch three), and show you a gar-

den and a view or so. The town is not so cheap as places farther off, but you get a great deal for your money, and by far the best wine at tenpence a bottle that I have ever drank anywhere. I really desire no better.

I may mention for your guidance (for I count upon your coming to overhaul the general aspect of things), that you have nothing on earth to do with your luggage when it is once in the boat, *until after you have walked ashore*. That you will be filtered with the rest of the passengers through a hideous, whitewashed, quarantine-looking custom-house, where a stern man of a military aspect will demand your passport. That you will have nothing of the sort, but will produce your card with this addition: "Restant à Boulogne, chez M. Charles Dickens, Château des Moulineaux." That you will then be passed out at a little door, like one of the ill-starred prisoners on the bloody September night, into a yelling and shrieking crowd, cleaving the air with the names of the different hotels, exactly seven thousand six hundred and fifty-four in number. And that your heart will be on the point of sinking with dread, then you will find yourself in the arms of the Sparkler of Albion. All unite in kindest regards.

Ever affectionately.

P.S.—I thought you might like to see the flourish again.

Mr. W. H.
Wills.

BOULOGNE, *Wednesday, July 27th*, 1853.

MY DEAR WILLS,

I have thought of another article to be called "Frauds upon the Fairies," *à propos* of George Cruik-

shank's editing. Half playfully and half seriously, I mean to protest most strongly against alteration, for any purpose, of the beautiful little stories which are so tenderly and humanly useful to us in these times, when the world is too much with us, early and late; and then to re-write "Cinderella" according to Total Abstinence, Peace Society, and Bloomer principles, and expressly for their propagation.

I shall want his book of "Hop o' my Thumb" (Forster noticed it in the last *Examiner*), and the most simple and popular version of "Cinderella" you can get me. I shall not be able to do it until after finishing "Bleak House," but I shall do it the more easily for having the books by me. So send them, if convenient, in your next parcel.

Ever faithfully.

CHATEAU DES MOULINEAUX, BOULOGNE,

Sunday, Aug. 24th, 1853.

Mr. W. C.
Macready.

MY DEAREST MACREADY,

Some unaccountable delay in the transmission here of the parcel which contained your letter, caused me to come into the receipt of it a whole week after its date. I immediately wrote to Miss Coutts, who has written to you, and I hope some good may come of it. I know it will not be her fault if none does. I was very much concerned to read your account of poor Mrs. Warner, and to read her own plain and unaffected account of herself. Pray assure her of my cordial sympathy and remembrance, and of my earnest desire to do anything in my power to help to put her mind at ease.

We are living in a beautiful little country place

here, where I have been hard at work ever since I came, and am now (after an interval of a week's rest) going to work again to finish "Bleak House." Kate and Georgina send their kindest loves to you, and Miss Macready, and all the rest. They look forward, I assure you, to their Sherborne visit, when I—a mere forlorn wanderer—shall be roaming over the Alps into Italy. I saw "The Midsummer Night's Dream" of the Opéra Comique, done here (very well) last night. The way in which a poet named Willyim Shay Kes Peer gets drunk in company with Sir John Foll Stayffe, figths with a noble 'night, Lor Latimeer (who is in love with a maid-of-honour you may have read of in history, called Mees Oleevia), and promises not to do so any more on observing symptoms of love for him in the Queen of England, is very remarkable. Queen Elizabeth, too, in the profound and impenetrable disguise of a black velvet mask, two inches deep by three broad, following him into taverns and worse places, and enquiring of persons of doubtful reputation for "the sublime Williams," was inexpressibly ridiculous. And yet the nonsense was done with a sense quite admirable.

I have been very much struck by the book you sent me. It is one of the wisest, the manliest, and most serviceable I ever read. I am reading it again with the greatest pleasure and admiration.

Ever most affectionately yours,

My dear Macready.

VILLA DES MOULINEAUX, BOULOGNE,

Saturday, Aug. 27th, 1853.

The Hon.
Mrs.
Watson.

MY DEAR MRS. WATSON,

I received your letter—most welcome and full of interest to me—when I was hard at work finishing “Bleak House.” We are always talking of you; and I had said but the day before, that one of the first things I would do on my release would be to write to you. To finish the topic of “Bleak House” at once, I will only add that I like the conclusion very much and think it *very pretty indeed*. The story has taken extraordinarily, especially during the last five or six months, when its purpose has been gradually working itself out. It has retained its immense circulation from the first, beating dear old “Copperfield” by a round ten thousand or more. I have never had so many readers. We had a little reading of the final double number here the night before last, and it made a great impression I assure you.

We are all extremely well, and like Boulogne very much indeed. I laid down the rule before we came, that we would know nobody here, and we *do* know nobody here. We evaded callers as politely as we could, and gradually came to be understood and left to ourselves. It is a fine bracing air, a beautiful open country, and an admirable mixture of town and country. We live on a green hill-side out of the town, but are in the town (on foot) in ten minutes. Things are tolerably cheap, and exceedingly good; the people very cheerful, good-looking, and obliging; the houses very clean; the distance to London short, and easily traversed. I think if you came to know the place (which

I never did myself until last October, often as I have been through it), you could be but in one mind about it.

Charley is still at Leipzig. I shall take him up somewhere on the Rhine, to bring him home for Christmas, as I come back on my own little tour. He has been in the Hartz Mountains on a walking tour, and has written a journal thereof, which he has sent home in portions. It has cost about as much in postage as would have bought a pair of ponies.

I contemplate starting from here on Monday, the 10th of October; Catherine, Georgina, and the rest of them will then go home. I shall go first by Paris and Geneva to Lausanne, for it has a separate place in my memory. If the autumn should be very fine (just possible after such a summer), I shall then go by Chamonix and Martigny, over the Simplon to Milan, thence to Genoa, Leghorn, Pisa, and Naples, thence, I hope, to Sicily. Back by Bologna, Florence, Rome, Verona, Mantua, etc., to Venice, and home by Germany, arriving in good time for Christmas Day. Three nights in Christmas week, I have promised to read in the Town Hall at Birmingham, for the benefit of a new and admirable institution for working men projected there. The Friday will be the last night, and I shall read the "Carol" to two thousand working people, stipulating that they shall have that night entirely to themselves.

It just occurs to me that I mean to engage, for the two months odd, a travelling servant. I have not yet got one. If you should happen to be interested in any good foreigner, well acquainted with the countries

and the languages, who would like such a master, how delighted I should be to like *him*!

Ever since I have been here, I have been very hard at work, often getting up at daybreak to write through many hours. I have never had the least return of illness, thank God, though I was so altered (in a week) when I came here, that I doubt if you would have known me. I am redder and browner than ever at the present writing, with the addition of a rather formidable and fierce moustache. Lowestoft I know, by walking over there from Yarmouth, when I went down on an exploring expedition, previous to "Copperfield." It is a fine place. I saw the name "Blunderstone" on a direction-post between it and Yarmouth, and took it from the said direction-post for the book. We imagined the Captain's ecstasies when we saw the birth of his child in the papers. In some of the descriptions of Chesney Wold, I have taken many bits, chiefly about trees and shadows, from observations made at Rockingham. I wonder whether you have ever thought so! I shall hope to hear from you again soon, and shall not fail to write again before I go away. There seems to be nothing but "I" in this letter; but "I" know, my dear friend, that you will be more interested in that letter in the present connection, than in any other I could take from the alphabet.

Catherine and Georgina send their kindest loves, and more messages than this little sheet would hold. If I were to give you a hint of what we feel at the sight of your hand-writing, and at the receipt of a word from yourself about yourself, and the dear boys, and the precious little girls, I should begin to be sorrowful, which is rather the tendency of my mind at

the close of another long book. I heard from Cerjat two or three days since. Goff, by-the-bye, lived in this house two years.

Ever, my dear Mrs. Watson,

Yours, with true affection and regard.

Mr. Peter
Cunning-
ham.

CHATEAU DES MOULINEAUX, RUE BEAUREPAIRE, BOULOGNE.

MY DEAR CUNNINGHAM,

A note—Cerberus-like—of three heads.

First. I know you will be glad to hear that the manager is himself again. Vigorous, brown, energetic, muscular; the pride of Albion and the admiration of Gaul.

Secondly. I told Wills when I left home, that I was quite pained to see the end of your excellent "Bowl of Punch" altered. I was unaffectedly touched and gratified by the heartiness of the original; and saw no earthly, celestial, or subterranean objection to its remaining, as it did not so unmistakably apply to me as to necessitate the observance of my usual precaution in the case of such references, by any means.

Thirdly. If you ever have a holiday that you don't know what to do with, *do* come and pass a little time here. We live in a charming garden in a very pleasant country, and should be delighted to receive you. Excellent light wines on the premises, French cookery, millions of roses, two cows (for milk punch), vegetables cut for the pot, and handed in at the kitchen window; five summer-houses, fifteen fountains (with no water in 'em), and thirty-seven clocks (keeping, as I conceive, Australian time; having no reference whatever to the hours on this side of the globe).

I know, my dear Cunningham, that the British nation can ill afford to lose you; and that when the Audit Office mice are away, the cats of that great public establishment will play. But pray consider that the bow may be sometimes bent too long, and that ever-arduous application, even in patriotic service, is to be avoided. No one can more highly estimate your devotion to the best interests of Britain than I. But I wish to see it tempered with a wise consideration for your own amusement, recreation, and pastime. All work and no play may make Peter a dull boy as well as Jack. And (if I may claim the privilege of friendship to remonstrate) I would say that you do not take enough time for your meals. Dinner, for instance, you habitually neglect. Believe me, this rustic repose will do you good. Winkles also are to be obtained in these parts, and it is well remarked by Poor Richard, that a bird in the handbook is worth two in the bush.

Ever cordially yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, LONDON, *Sept. 8th*, 1853.

Mr. Walter
Savage
Landor.

MY DEAR LANDOR,

I am in town for a day or two, and Forster tells me I may now write to thank you for the happiness you have given me by honouring my name with such generous mention, on such a noble place, in your great book. I believe he has told you already that I wrote to him from Boulogne, not knowing what to do, as I had not received the precious volume, and feared you might have some plan of sending it to me, with which my premature writing would interfere.

You know how heartily and inexpressibly I prize what you have written to me, or you never would have

selected me for such a distinction. I could never thank you enough, my dear Landor, and I will not thank you in words any more. Believe me, I receive the dedication like a great dignity, the worth of which I hope I thoroughly know. The Queen could give me none in exchange that I wouldn't laughingly snap my fingers at.

We are staying at Boulogne until the 10th of October, when I go into Italy until Christmas, and the rest come home.

Kate and Georgina would send you their best loves if they were here, and would never leave off talking about it if I went back and told them I had written to you without such mention of them. Walter is a very good boy, and comes home from school with honourable commendation. He passed last Sunday in solitary confinement (in a bath-room) on bread and water, for terminating a dispute with the nurse by throwing a chair in her direction. It is the very first occasion of his ever having got into trouble, for he is a great favourite with the whole house, and one of the most amiable boys in the boy world. (He comes out on birthdays in a blaze of shirt-pin).

If I go and look at your old house, as I shall if I go to Florence, I shall bring you back another leaf from the same tree as I plucked the last from.

Ever, my dear Landor,
Heartily and affectionately yours.

Mr. John
Delane.

VILLA DES MOULINEAUX, BOULOGNE,
Monday, Sept. 12th, 1853.

MY DEAR DELANE,

I am very much obliged to you, I assure you, for your frank and full reply to my note. Nothing could

be more satisfactory, and I have to-day seen Mr. Gibson and placed my two small representatives under his charge. His manner is exactly what you describe him. I was greatly pleased with his genuineness altogether.

We remain here until the tenth of next month, when I am going to desert my wife and family and run about Italy until Christmas. If I can execute any little commission for you or Mrs. Delane—in the Genoa street of silversmiths, or anywhere else—I shall be delighted to do so. I have been in the receipt of several letters from Macready lately, and rejoice to find him quite himself again, though I have great misgivings that he will lose his eldest boy before he can be got to India.

Mrs. Dickens and her sister are proud of your message, and beg their kind regards to be forwarded in return; my other half being particularly comforted and encouraged by your account of Mr. Gibson. In this charge I am to include Mrs. Delane, who, I hope, will make an exchange of remembrances, and give me hers for mine.

I never saw anything so ridiculous as this place at present. They expected the Emperor ten or twelve days ago, and put up all manner of triumphal arches made of evergreens, which look like tea-leaves now, and will take a withered and weird appearance hardly to be foreseen, long before the twenty-fifth, when the visit is vaguely expected to come off. In addition to these faded garlands all over the leading streets, there are painted eagles hoisted over gateways and sprawling across a hundred ways, which have been washed out by the rain and are now being blistered by the

sun, until they look horribly ludicrous. And a number of our benighted compatriots who came over to see a perfect blaze of *fêtes*, go wandering among these shrivelled preparations and staring at ten thousand flag-poles without any flags upon them, with a kind of indignant curiosity and personal injury quite irresistible. With many thanks,

Very faithfully yours.

Mr. W. H.
Wills.

BOULOGNE, *Sunday, Sept. 18th, 1853.*

MY DEAR WILLS,

COURIER.

Edward Kaub will bring this. He turned up yesterday, accounting for his delay by waiting for a written recommendation, and having at the last moment (as a foreigner, not being an Englishman) a passport to get. I quite agree with you as to his appearance and manner, and have engaged him. It strikes me that it would be an excellent beginning if you would deliver him a neat and appropriate address, telling him what in your conscience you can find to tell of me favourably as a master, and particularly impressing upon him *readiness and punctuality* on his part as the great things to be observed. I think it would have a much better effect than anything I could say in this stage, if said from yourself. But I shall be much obliged to you if you will act upon this hint forthwith.

W. H. WILLS.

No letter having arrived from the popular author of "The Larboard Fin,"* by this morning's post, I

* Meaning Mr. W. H. Wills himself.

rather think one must be on the way in the pocket of Gordon's son. If Kaub calls for this before young Scotland arrives, you will understand if I do not herein refer to an unreceived letter. But I shall leave this open, until Kaub comes for it.

Every faithfully.

VILLA DES MOULINEAUX, BOULOGNE,

Wednesday, Sept. 21st, 1853.

The
Lord John
Russell.

MY DEAR LORD,

Your note having been forwarded to me here, I cannot forbear thanking you with all my heart for your great kindness. Mr. Forster had previously sent me a copy of your letter to him, together with the expression of the high and lasting gratification he had in your handsome response. I know he feels it most sincerely.

I became the prey of a perfect spasm of sensitive twinges, when I found that the close of "Bleak House" had not penetrated to "the wilds of the North" when your letter left those parts. I was so very much interested in it myself when I wrote it here last month, that I have a fond sort of faith in its interesting its readers. But for the hope that you may have got it by this time, I should refuse comfort. That supports me.

The book has been a wonderful success. Its audience enormous.

I fear there is not much chance of my being able to execute any little commission for Lady John anywhere in Italy. But I am going across the Alps, leaving here on the tenth of next month, and returning home to London for Christmas Day, and

should indeed be happy if I could do her any dwarf service.

You will be interested, I think, to hear that Poole lives happily on his pension, and lives within it. He is quite incapable of any mental exertion, and what he would have done without it I cannot imagine. I send it to him at Paris every quarter. It is something, even amid the estimation in which you are held, which is but a foreshadowing of what shall be by-and-by as the people advance, to be so gratefully remembered as he, with the best reason, remembers you. Forgive my saying this. But the manner of that transaction, no less than the matter, is always fresh in my memory in association with your name, and I cannot help it.

My dear Lord,

Yours very faithfully and obliged.

The Hon.
Mrs.
Watson.

BOULOGNE, *Wednesday, Sept. 21st, 1853.*

MY DEAR MRS. WATSON,

The courier was unfortunately engaged. He offered to recommend another, but I had several applicants, and begged Mr. Wills to hold a grand review at the "Household Words" office and select the man who is to bring me down as his victim. I am extremely sorry the man you recommend was not to be had. I should have been so delighted to take him.

I am finishing "The Child's History," and clearing the way through "Household Words," in general, before I go on my trip. I forget whether I told you that Mr. Egg the painter and Mr. Collins are going with me. The other day I was in town. In case you

should not have heard of the condition of that deserted village, I think it worth mentioning. All the streets of any note were unpaved, mountains high, and all the omnibuses were sliding down alleys, and looking into the upper windows of small houses. At eleven o'clock one morning I was positively *alone* in Bond Street. I went to one of my tailors, and he was at Brighton. A smutty-faced woman among some gorgeous regimentals, half finished, had not the least idea when he would be back. I went to another of my tailors, and he was in an upper room, with open windows and surrounded by mignonette boxes, playing the piano in the bosom of his family. I went to my hosier's, and two of the least presentable of "the young men" of that elegant establishment were playing at draughts in the back shop. (Likewise I beheld a porter-pot hastily concealed under a Turkish dressing-gown of a golden pattern.) I then went wandering about to look for some ingenious portmanteau, and near the corner of St. James's Street saw a solitary being sitting in a trunk-shop, absorbed in a book which, on a close inspection, I found to be "Bleak House." I thought this looked well, and went in. And he really was more interested in seeing me, when he knew who I was, than any face I had seen in any house, every house I knew being occupied by painters, including my own. I went to the Athenæum that same night, to get my dinner, and it was shut up for repairs. I went home late, and had forgotten the key and was locked out.

Preparations were made here, about six weeks ago, to receive the Emperor, who is not come yet. Meanwhile our countrymen (deluded in the first ex-

citement) go about staring at these arrangements, with a personal injury upon them which is most ridiculous. And they *will* persist in speaking an unknown tongue to the French people, who *will* speak English to them.

Kate and Georgina send their kindest loves. We are all quite well. Going to drop two small boys here, at school with a former Eton tutor highly recommended to me. Charley was heard of a day or two ago. He says his professor "is very short-sighted, always in green spectacles, always drinking weak beer, always smoking a pipe, and always at work." The last qualification seems to appear to Charley the most astonishing one.

Ever, my dear Mrs. Watson,
Most affectionately yours.

Miss
Hogarth.

HOTEL DE LA VILLA, MILAN, *Tuesday, Oct. 25th, 1853.*

MY DEAR GEORGY,

I have walked to that extent in Switzerland (walked over the Simplon on Sunday, as an addition to the other feats) that one pair of the new strong shoes has gone to be mended this morning, and the other is in but a poor way; the snow having played the mischief with them.

On the Swiss side of the Simplon, we slept at the beastliest little town, in the wildest kind of house, where some fifty cats tumbled into the corridor outside our bed-rooms all at once in the middle of the night—whether through the roof or not, I don't know; for it was dark when we got up—and made such a horrible and terrific noise that we started out of our beds in a panic. I strongly objected to opening the door

lest they should get into the room and tear at us; but Edward opened his, and laid about him until he dispersed them. At Domo D'Ossola we had three immense bedrooms (Egg's bed twelve feet wide!), and a sala of imperceptible extent in the dim light of two candles and a wood fire; but were very well and very cheaply entertained. Here, we are, as you know, housed in the greatest comfort.

We continue to get on very well together. We really do admirably. I lose no opportunity of inculcating the lesson that it is of no use to be out of temper in travelling, and it is very seldom wanted for any of us. Egg is an excellent fellow, and full of good qualities; I am sure a generous and staunch man at heart, and a good and honourable nature.

I shall send Catherine from Genoa a list of the places where letters will find me. I shall hope to hear from you too, and shall be very glad indeed to do so. No more at present.

Ever most affectionately.

CROCE DI MALTA, GENOA, *Saturday, Oct. 29th, 1853.*

Miss
Hogarth.

MY DEAREST GEORGY,

We had thirty-one hours consecutively on the road between this and Milan, and arrived here in a rather damaged condition. We live at the top of this immense house, overlooking the port and sea, pleasantly and airily enough, though it is no joke to get so high, and though the apartment is rather vast and faded.

The old walks are pretty much the same as ever,

except that they have built behind the Peschiere on the San Bartolomeo hill, and changed the whole town towards San Pietro d'Arena, where we seldom went. The Bisagno looks just the same, strong just now, and with very little water in it. Vicoli stink exactly as they used to, and are fragrant with the same old flavour of very rotten cheese kept in very hot blankets. The Mezzaro pervades them as before. The old Jesuit college in the Strada Nuova is under the present government the Hôtel de Ville, and a very splendid caffè with a terrace garden has arisen between it and Palavicini's old palace. Another new and handsome caffè has been built in the Piazza Carlo Felice, between the old caffè of the Bei Arti (where Fletcher stopped for the bouquets in the green times, when we went to the——'s party), and the Strada Carlo Felice. The old beastly gate and guardhouse on the Albaro road are still in their dear old beastly state, and the whole of that road is just as it was. The man without legs is still in the Strada Nuova; but the beggars in general are all cleared off, and our old one-armed Belisario made a sudden evaporation a year or two ago. I am going to the Peschiere to-day. The puppets are here, and the opera is open, but only with a buffo company, and without a buffet. We went to the Scala, where they did an opera of Verdi's, called "Il Trovatore," and a poor enough ballet. The whole performance miserable indeed. I wish you were here to take some of the old walks. It is quite strange to walk about alone. Good-bye, my dear Georgy. Pray tell me how Kate is. I rather fancy from her letter, though I scarcely know why, that she is not quite as well as she was at Boulogne. I was charmed with your account

of the Plornishghenter and everything and everybody else. Kiss them all for me.

Ever most affectionately yours.

HÔTEL DES ÉTRANGERS, NAPLES,

Friday Night, Nov. 4th, 1853.

Miss
Hogarth.

MY DEAREST GEORGY,

Instead of embarking on Monday at Genoa, we were delayed (in consequence of the boat's being a day later when there are thirty-one days in the month) until Tuesday. Going aboard that morning at half-past nine, we found the steamer more than full of passengers from Marseilles, and in a state of confusion not to be described. We could get no places at the table, got our dinners how we could on deck, had no berths or sleeping accommodation of any kind, and had paid heavy first-class fares! To add to this, we got to Leghorn too late to steam away again that night, getting the ship's papers examined first—as the authorities said so, not being favourable to the new express English ship, English officered—and we lay off the lighthouse all night long. The scene on board beggars description. Ladies on the tables, gentlemen under the tables, and ladies and gentlemen lying indiscriminately on the open deck, arrayed like spoons on a sideboard. No mattresses, no blankets, nothing. Towards midnight, attempts were made by means of an awning and flags to make this latter scene remotely approach an Australian encampment; and we three lay together on the bare planks covered with overcoats. We were all gradually dozing off when a perfectly tropical rain fell, and in a moment drowned the whole ship. The rest of the night was passed upon the stairs,

with an immense jumble of men and women. When anybody came up for any purpose we all fell down; and when anybody came down we all fell up again. Still, the good-humour in the English part of the passengers was quite extraordinary. There were excellent officers aboard, and the first mate lent me his cabin to wash in in the morning, which I afterwards lent to Egg and Collins. Then we and the Emerson Tennents (who were aboard) and the captain, the doctor, and the second officer went off on a jaunt together to Pisa, as the ship was to lie at Leghorn all day.

The captain was a capital fellow, but I led him, facetiously, such a life all day, that I got almost everything altered at night. Emerson Tennent, with the greatest kindness, turned his son out of his state room (who, indeed, volunteered to go in the most amiable manner), and I got a good bed there. The store-room down by the hold was opened for Egg and Collins, and they slept with the moist sugar, the cheese in cut, the spices, the cruets, the apples and pears—in a perfect chandler's shop; in company with what the——'s would call a "hold gent"—who had been so horribly wet through overnight that his condition frightened the authorities—a cat, and the steward—who dozed in an armchair, and all night long fell headforemost, once in every five minutes, on Egg, who slept on the counter or dresser. Last night I had the steward's own cabin, opening on deck, all to myself. It had been previously occupied by some desolate lady, who went ashore at Civita Vecchia. There was little or no sea, thank Heaven, all the trip; but the rain was heavier than any I have ever seen, and the lightning very constant and vivid. We were, with the crew, some two hundred

people; with boats, at the utmost stretch, for one hundred, perhaps. I could not help thinking what would happen if we met with any accident; the crew being chiefly Maltese, and evidently fellows who would cut off alone in the largest boat on the least alarm. The speed (it being the crack express ship for the India mail) very high; also the running through all the narrow rocky channels. Thank God, however, here we are. Though the more sensible and experienced part of the passengers agreed with me this morning that it was not a thing to try often. We had an excellent table after the first day, the best wines and so forth, and the captain and I swore eternal friendship. Ditto the first officer and the majority of the passengers. We got into the bay about seven this morning, but could not land until noon. We towed from Civita Vecchia the entire Greek navy, I believe, consisting of a little brig-of-war, with great guns, fitted as a steamer, but disabled by having burst the bottom of her boiler in her first run. She was just big enough to carry the captain and a crew of six or so, but the captain was so covered with buttons and gold that there never would have been room for him on board to put these valuables away if he hadn't worn them, which he consequently did, all night.

Whenever anything was wanted to be done, as slackening the tow-rope or anything of that sort, our officers roared at this miserable potentate, in violent English, through a speaking-trumpet, of which he couldn't have understood a word under the most favourable circumstances, so he did all the wrong things first, and the right things always last. The absence of

any knowledge of anything not English on the part of the officers and stewards was most ridiculous. I met an Italian gentleman on the cabin steps, yesterday morning, vainly endeavouring to explain that he wanted a cup of tea for his sick wife. And when we were coming out of the harbour at Genoa, and it was necessary to order away that boat of music you remember, the chief officer (called aft for the purpose, as "knowing something of Italian,") delivered himself in this explicit and clear manner to the principal performer: "Now, signora, if you don't sheer off, you'll be run down; so you had better trice up that guitar of yours, and put about."

We get on as well as possible, and it is extremely pleasant and interesting, and I feel that the change is doing me great and real service, after a long continuous strain upon the mind; but I am pleased to think that we are at our farthest point, and I look forward with joy to coming home again, to my old room, and the old walks, and all the old pleasant things.

I wish I had arranged, or could have done so—for it would not have been easy—to find some letters here. It is a blank to stay for five days in a place without any.

I don't think Edward knows fifty Italian words; but much more French is spoken in Italy now than when we were here, and he stumbles along somehow.

I am afraid this is a dull letter, for I am very tired. You must take the will for the deed, my dear, and good night.

Ever most affectionately.

ROME, *Sunday Night, Nov. 13th, 1853.*Miss
Hogarth.

MY DEAREST GEORGY,

We arrived here yesterday afternoon, at between three and four. On sending to the post-office this morning, I received your pleasant little letter, and one from Miss Coutts, who is still at Paris. But to my amazement there was none from Catherine! You mention her writing, and I cannot but suppose that your two letters must have been posted together. However, I received none from her, and I have all manner of doubts respecting the plainness of its direction. They will not produce the letters here as at Genoa, but persist in looking them out at the post-office for you. I shall send again to-morrow, and every day until Friday, when we leave here. If I find no letter from her *to-morrow*, I shall write to her nevertheless by that post which brings this, so that you may both hear from me together.

One night, at Naples, Edward came in, open-mouthed, to the table d'hôte where we were dining with the Tennents, to announce "The Marchese Garofalo." I at first thought it must be the little parrot-marquess who was once your escort from Genoa; but I found him to be a man (married to an Englishwoman) whom we used to meet at Ridgway's. He was very glad to see me, and I afterwards met him at dinner at Mr. Lowther's, our chargé d'affaires. Mr. Lowther was at the Rockingham play, and is a very agreeable fellow. We had an exceedingly pleasant dinner of eight, preparatory to which I was near having the ridiculous adventure of not being able to find the house and coming back dinnerless. I went in an open carriage from the

hotel in all state, and the coachman, to my surprise, pulled up at the end of the Chiaja. "Behold the house," says he, "of Il Signor Larthoor!"—at the same time pointing with his whip into the seventh heaven, where the early stars were shining. "But the Signor Larthoor," returns the Inimitable darling, "lives at Pausilippo." "It is true," says the coachman (still pointing to the evening star), "but he lives high up the Salita Sant' Antonio, where no carriage ever yet ascended, and that is the house" (evening star as afore-said), "and one must go on foot. Behold the Salita Sant' Antonio!" I went up it, a mile and a half I should think. I got into the strangest places, among the wildest Neapolitans—kitchens, washing-places, archways, stables, vineyards—was baited by dogs, answered in profoundly unintelligible Neapolitan, from behind lonely locked doors, in cracked female voices, quaking with fear; could hear of no such Englishman or any Englishman. By-and-by I came upon a Polenta-shop in the clouds, where an old Frenchman, with an umbrella like a faded tropical leaf (it had not rained for six weeks) was staring at nothing at all, with a snuff-box in his hand. To him I appealed concerning the Signor Larthoor. "Sir," said he, with the sweetest politeness, "can you speak French?" "Sir," said I, "a little." "Sir," said he, "I presume the Signor Loothere"—you will observe that he changed the name according to the custom of his country—"is an Englishman." I admitted that he was the victim of circumstances and had that misfortune. "Sir," said he, "one word more. *Has* he a servant with a wooden leg?" "Great Heaven, sir," said I, "how do I know! I should think not, but it is possible." "It is always," said the Frenchman,

“possible. Almost all the things of the world are always possible.” “Sir,” said I—you may imagine my condition and dismal sense of my own absurdity, by this time—“that is true.” He then took an immense pinch of snuff, wiped the dust off his umbrella, led me to an arch commanding a wonderful view of the bay of Naples, and pointed deep into the earth from which I had mounted. “Below there, near the lamp, one finds an Englishman, with a servant with a wooden leg. It is always possible that he is the Signor Loothere.” I had been asked at six, and it was now getting on for seven. I went down again in a state of perspiration and misery not to be described, and without the faintest hope of finding the place. But as I was going down to the lamp, I saw the strangest staircase up a dark corner, with a man in a white-waistcoat (evidently hired) standing on the top of it, fuming. I dashed in at a venture, found it was the place, made the most of the whole story, and was indescribably popular. The best of it was, that as nobody ever did find the place, he had put a servant at the bottom of the Salita, to “wait for an English gentleman.” The servant (as he presently pleaded), deceived by the moustache, had allowed the English gentleman to pass unchallenged.

The night before we left Naples we were at the San Carlo, where, with the Verdi rage of our old Genoa time, they were again doing the “Trovatore.” It seemed rubbish on the whole to me, but was very fairly done. I think “La Tenco,” the prima donna, will soon be a great hit in London. She is a very remarkable singer and a fine actress, to the best of my judgment on such premises. There seems to be no

opera here, at present. There was a Festa in St. Peter's to-day, and the Pope passed to the Cathedral in state. We were all there.

We leave here, please God, on Friday morning, and post to Florence in three days and a half. We came here by Vetturino. Upon the whole, the roadside inns are greatly improved since our time. Half-past three and half-past four have been, however, our usual times of rising on the road.

I was in my old place at the Coliseum this morning, and it was as grand as ever. With that exception the ruined part of Rome—the real original Rome—looks smaller than my remembrance made it. It is the only place on which I have yet found that effect. We are in the old hotel.

You are going to Bonchurch I suppose? will be there, perhaps, when this letter reaches you? I shall be pleased to think of you as at home again, and making the commodious family mansion look natural and home-like. I don't like to think of my room without anybody to peep into it now and then. Here is a world of travelling arrangements for me to settle, and here are Collins and Egg looking sideways at me with an occasional imploring glance as beseeching me to settle it. So I leave off. Good-night.

Ever, my dearest Georgy,

Most affectionately yours.

Sir James
Emerson
Tennent.

HÔTEL DES ÎLES BRITANNIQUES, PIAZZA DEL POPOLO, ROME,

Monday, Nov. 14th, 1853.

MY DEAR TENNENT,

As I never made a good bargain in my life—except once, when, on going abroad, I let my house on

excellent terms to an admirable tenant, who never paid anything—I sent Edward into the Casa Dies yesterday morning, while I invested the premises from the outside, and carefully surveyed them. It is a very clean, large, bright-looking house at the corner of the Via Gregoriana; not exactly in a part of Rome I should pick out for living in, and on what I should be disposed to call the wrong side of the street. However, this is not to the purpose. Signor Dies has no idea of letting an apartment for a short time—scouted the idea of a month—signified that he could not be brought to the contemplation of two months—was by no means clear that he could come down to the consideration of three. This of course settled the business speedily.

This hotel is no longer kept by the Melloni I spoke of, but is even better kept than in his time, and is a very admirable house. I have engaged a small apartment for you to be ready on Thursday afternoon (at two piastres and a half—two-and-a-half per day—sitting-room and three bedrooms, one double-bedded and two not). If you would like to change to ours, which is a very good one, on Friday morning, you can of course do so. As our dining-room is large, and there is no table d'hôte here, I will order dinner in it for our united parties at six on Thursday. You will be able to decide how to arrange for the remainder of your stay, after being here and looking about you—two really necessary considerations in Rome.

Pray make my kind regards to Lady Tennent, and Miss Tennent, and your good son, who became homeless for my sake. Mr. Egg and Mr. Collins desire to be also remembered.

It has been beautiful weather since we left Naples,

until to-day, when it rains in a very dogged, sullen, downcast, and determined manner. We have been speculating at breakfast on the possibility of its raining in a similar manner at Naples, and of your wandering about the hotel, refusing consolation.

I grieve to report the Orvieto considerably damaged by the general vine failure, but still far from despicable. Montefiascone (the Est wine you know) is to be had here; and we have had one bottle in the very finest condition, and one in a second-rate state.

The Coliseum, in its magnificent old decay, is as grand as ever; and with the electric telegraph darting through one of its ruined arches like a sunbeam and piercing direct through its cruel old heart, is even grander.

Believe me always, very faithfully yours.

Mrs.
Charles
Dickens.

ROME, *Monday, Nov. 14th, 1853.*

MY DEAREST CATHERINE,

As I have mentioned in my letter to Georgy (written last night but posted with this), I received her letter without yours, to my unbounded astonishment. This morning, on sending again to the post-office, I at last got yours, and most welcome it is with all its contents.

I found Layard at Naples, who went up Vesuvius with us, and was very merry and agreeable. He is travelling with Lord and Lady Somers, and Lord Somers being laid up with an attack of malaria fever, Layard had a day to spare. Craven, who was Lord Normanby's Secretary of Legation in Paris, now lives at Naples, and is married to a French lady. He is very hospitable and hearty, and seemed to have vague ideas that

something might be done in a pretty little private theatre he has in his house. He told me of Fanny Kemble and the Sartoris's being here. I have also heard of Thackeray's being here—I don't know how truly. Lockhart is here, and, I fear, very ill. I mean to go and see him.

We are living in the old hotel, which is not now kept by Meloni, who has retired. I don't know whether you recollect an apartment at the top of the house, to which we once ran up with poor Roche to see the horses start in the race at the Carnival time? That is ours, in which I at present write. We have a large back dining-room, a handsome front drawing-room, looking into the Piazza del Popolo, and three front bedrooms, all on a floor. The whole costs us about four shillings a day each. The hotel is better kept than ever. There is a little kitchen to each apartment where the dinner is kept hot. There is no house comparable to it in Paris, and it is better than Mivart's. We start for Florence, post, on Friday morning, and I am bargaining for a carriage to take us on to Venice.

Edward is an excellent servant, and always cheerful and ready for his work. He knows no Italian, except the names of a few things, but French is far more widely known here now than in our time. Neither is he an experienced courier as to roads and so forth; but he picks up all that I want to know, here and there, somehow or other. I am perfectly pleased with him, and would rather have him than an older hand. Poor dear Roche comes back to my mind though, often.

I have written to engage the courier from Turin into France, from *Tuesday, the 6th December*. This will

bring us home some two days after the tenth, probably. I wrote to Charley from Naples, giving him his choice of meeting me at Lyons, in Paris, or at Boulogne. I gave him full instructions what to do if he arrived before me, and he will write to me at Turin saying where I shall find him. I shall be a day or so later than I supposed as the nearest calculation I could make when I wrote to him; but his waiting for me at an hotel will not matter.

We have had delightful weather, with one day's exception, until to-day, when it rained very heavily and suddenly. Egg and Collins have gone to the Vatican, and I am "going" to try whether I can hit out anything for the Christmas number. Give my love to Forster, and tell him I won't write to him until I hear from him.

I have not come across any English whom I know except Layard and the Emerson Tennents, who will be here on Thursday from Civita Vecchia, and are to dine with us. The losses up to this point have been two pairs of shoes (one mine and one Egg's), Collins's snuff-box, and Egg's dressing-gown.

We observe the managerial punctuality in all our arrangements, and have not had any difference whatever.

I have been reserving this side all through my letter, in the conviction that I had something else to tell you. If I had, I cannot remember what it is. I introduced myself to Salvatore at Vesuvius, and reminded him of the night when poor Le Gros fell down the mountains. He was full of interest directly, remembered the very hole, put on his gold-banded cap, and went up with us himself. He did not know that Le

Gros was dead, and was very sorry to hear it. He asked after the ladies, and hoped they were very happy, to which I answered, "Very." The cone is completely changed since our visit, is not at all recognisable as the same place; and there is no fire from the mountain, though there is a great deal of smoke. Its last demonstration was in 1850.

I shall be glad to think of your all being at home again, as I suppose you will be soon after the receipt of this. Will you see to the invitations for Christmas Day, and write to Lætitia? I shall be very happy to be at home again myself, and to embrace you; for of course I miss you *very much*, though I feel that I could not have done a better thing to clear my mind and freshen it up again, than make this expedition. If I find Charley much ahead of me, I shall start on through a night or so to meet him, and leave the others to catch us up. I look upon the journey as almost closed at Turin. My best love to Mamey, and Katey, and Sydney, and Harry, and the darling Plornishghenter. We often talk about them, and both my companions do so with interest. They always send all sorts of messages to you, which I never deliver. God bless you! Take care of yourself.

Ever most affectionately.

ROME, *Thursday Afternoon, Nov. 17th, 1853.* Mr. W. H. Wills.

MY DEAR WILLS,

Just as I wrote the last words of the enclosed little story for the Christmas number just now, Edward brought in your letter. Also one from Forster (tell him) which I have not yet opened. I will write again

—and write to him—from Florence. I am delighted to have news of you.

The enclosed little paper for the Christmas number is in a character that nobody else is likely to hit, and which is pretty sure to be considered pleasant. Let Forster have the MS. with the proof, and I know he will correct it to the minutest point. I have a notion of another little story, also for the Christmas number. If I can do it at Venice, I will, and send it straight on. But it is not easy to work under these circumstances. In travelling we generally get up about three; and in resting we are perpetually roaming about in all manner of places. Not to mention my being laid hold of by all manner of people.

KEEP "HOUSEHOLD WORDS" IMAGINATIVE! is the solemn and continual Conductorial Injunction. Delighted to hear of Mrs. Gaskell's contributions.

Yes by all manner of means to Lady Holland. Will you ask her whether she has Sydney Smith's letters to me, which I placed (at Mrs. Smith's request) either in Mrs. Smith's own hands or in Mrs. Austin's? I cannot remember which, but I think the latter.

In making up the Christmas number, don't consider my paper or papers, with any reference saving to where they will fall best. I have no liking, in the case, for any particular place.

All perfectly well. Companion moustaches (particularly Egg's) dismal in the extreme. Kindest regards to Mrs. Wills.

Ever faithfully.

FLORENCE, *Monday, Nov. 21st*, 1853.Mr. W. H.
Wills.

H. W.

MY DEAR WILLS,

I sent you by post from Rome, on Wednesday last, a little story for the Christmas number, called "The Schoolboy's Story." I have an idea of another short one, to be called "Nobody's Story," which I hope to be able to do at Venice, and to send you straight home before this month is out. I trust you have received the first safely.

Edward continues to do extremely well. He is always, early and late, what you have seen him. He is a very steady fellow, a little too bashful for a courier even; settles prices of everything now, as soon as we come into an hotel; and improves fast. His knowledge of Italian is painfully defective, and, in the midst of a howling crowd at a post-house or railway station, this deficiency perfectly stuns him. I was obliged last night to get out of the carriage, and pluck him from a crowd of porters who were putting our baggage into wrong conveyances—by cursing and ordering about in all directions. I should think about ten substantives, the names of ten common objects, form his whole Italian stock. It matters very little at the hotels, where a great deal of French is spoken now; but, on the road, if none of his party knew Italian, it would be a very serious inconvenience indeed.

Will you write to Ryland if you have not heard from him, and ask him what the Birmingham reading-nights are really to be? For it is ridiculous enough that I positively don't know. Can't a Saturday Night in a Truck District, or a Sunday Morning among the

Ironworkers (a fine subject) be knocked out in the course of the same visit?

If you should see any managing man you know in the Oriental and Peninsular Company, I wish you would very gravely mention to him from me that if they are not careful what they are about with their steamship *Valetta*, between Marseilles and Naples, they will suddenly find that they will receive a blow one fine day in *The Times*, which it will be a very hard matter for them ever to recover. When I sailed in her from Genoa, there had been taken on board, *with no caution in most cases from the agent, or hint of discomfort*, at least forty people of both sexes for whom there was no room whatever. I am a pretty old traveller as you know, but I never saw anything like the manner in which pretty women were compelled to lie among the men in the great cabin and on the bare decks. The good humour was beyond all praise, but the natural indignation very great; and I was repeatedly urged to stand up for the public in "Household Words," and to write a plain description of the facts to *The Times*. If I had done either, and merely mentioned that all these people paid heavy first-class fares, I will answer for it that they would have been beaten off the station in a couple of months. I did neither, because I was the best of friends with the captain and all the officers, and never saw such a fine set of men; so admirable in the discharge of their duty, and so zealous to do their best by everybody. It is impossible to praise them too highly. But there is a strong desire at all the ports along the coast to throw impediments in the way of the English service, and to favour the French and Italian boats. In those boats (which I know very

well) great care is taken of the passengers, and the accommodation is very good. If the Peninsula and Oriental add to all this the risk of such an exposure as they are *certain* to get (if they go on so) in *The Times*, they are dead sure to get a blow from the public which will make them stagger again. I say nothing of the number of the passengers and the room in the ship's boats, though the frightful consideration the contrast presented must have been in more minds than mine. I speak only of the taking people for whom there is no sort of accommodation as the most decided swindle, and the coolest, I ever did with my eyes behold.

kindest regards from fellow-travellers.

Ever, my dear Wills, faithfully yours.

VENICE, *Friday, November 25th*, 1853.

Miss
Hogarth,

MY DEAREST GEORGY,

We found an English carriage from Padua at Florence, and hired it to bring it back again. We travelled post with four horses all the way (from Padua to this place there is a railroad) and travelled all night. We left Florence at half-past six in the morning, and got to Padua at eleven next day—yesterday. The cold at night was most intense. I don't think I have ever felt it colder. But our carriage was very comfortable, and we had some wine and some rum to keep us warm. We came by Bologna (where we had tea) and Ferrara. You may imagine the delays in the night when I tell you that each of our passports, after receiving *six visés* at Florence, received in the course of the one night, *nine more*, every one of which was written and sealed; somebody being slowly knocked

out of bed to do it every time! It really was excruciating.

Landor had sent me a letter to his son, and on the day before we left Florence I thought I would go out to Fiesoli and leave it. So I got a little one-horse open carriage and drove off alone. We were within half a mile of the Villa Landoro, and were driving down a very narrow lane like one of those at Albaro, when I saw an elderly lady coming towards us, very well dressed in silk of the Queen's blue, and walking freshly and briskly against the wind at a good round pace. It was a bright, cloudless, very cold day, and I thought she walked with great spirit, as if she enjoyed it. I also thought (perhaps that was having him in my mind) that her ruddy face was shaped like Landor's. All of a sudden the coachman pulls up, and looks enquiringly at me. "What's the matter?" says I. "Ecco la Signora Landoro?" says he. "For the love of Heaven, don't stop," says I. "*I* don't know her, I am only going to the house to leave a letter—go on!" Meanwhile she (still coming on) looked at me, and I looked at her, and we were both a good deal confused, and so went our several ways. Altogether, I think it was as disconcerting a meeting as I ever took part in, and as odd a one. Under any other circumstances I should have introduced myself, but the separation made the circumstances so peculiar that "*I* didn't like."

The Plornishghenter is evidently the greatest, noblest, finest, cleverest, brightest, and most brilliant of boys. Your account of him is most delightful, and I hope to find another letter from you somewhere on the road, making me informed of his demeanour on

your return. On which occasion, as on every other, I have no doubt he will have distinguished himself as an irresistibly attracting, captivating May-Roon-Ti-Goon-Ter. Give him a good many kisses for me. I quite agree with Syd as to his ideas of paying attention to the old gentleman. It's not bad, but deficient in originality. The usual deficiency of an inferior intellect with so great a model before him. I am very curious to see whether the Plorn remembers me on my re-appearance.

I meant to have gone to work this morning, and to have tried a second little story for the Christmas number of "Household Words," but my letters have (most pleasantly) put me out, and I defer all such wise efforts until to-morrow. Egg and Collins are out in a gondola with a *servitore di piazza*.

You will find this but a stupid letter, but I really have no news. We go to the opera, whenever there is one, see sights, eat and drink, sleep in a natural manner two or three nights, and move on again. Edward was a little crushed at Padua yesterday. He had been extraordinarily cold all night in the rumble, and had got out our clothes to dress, and I think must have been projecting a five or six hours' sleep, when I announced that he was to come on here in an hour and a half to get the rooms and order dinner. He fell into a sudden despondency of the profoundest kind, but was quite restored when we arrived here between eight and nine. We found him waiting at the Custom House with a gondola in his usual brisk condition.

It is extraordinary how few English we see. With the exception of a gentlemanly young fellow (in a consumption I am afraid), married to the tiniest little girl,

in a brown straw hat, and travelling with his sister and her sister, and a consumptive single lady, travelling with a maid and a Scotch terrier christened Trotty Veck, we have scarcely seen any, and have certainly spoken to none, since we left Switzerland. These were aboard the *Valetta*, where the captain and I indulged in all manner of insane suppositions concerning the straw hat—the “Little Matron” we called her; by which name she soon became known all over the ship. The day we entered Rome, and the moment we entered it, there was the Little Matron, alone with antiquity—and Murray—on the wall. The very first church I entered, there was the Little Matron. On the last afternoon, when I went alone to St. Peter’s, there was the Little Matron and her party. The best of it is, that I was extremely intimate with them, invited them to Tavistock House, when they come home in the spring, and have not the faintest idea of their name.

There was no table d’hôte at Rome, or at Florence, but there is one here, and we dine at it to-day, so perhaps we may stumble upon somebody. I have heard from Charley this morning, who appoints (wisely) Paris as our place of meeting. I had a letter from Coote, at Florence, informing me that his volume of “Household Songs” was ready, and requesting permission to dedicate it to me. Which of course I gave.

I am beginning to think of the Birmingham readings. I suppose you won’t object to be taken to hear them? This is the last place at which we shall make a stay of more than one day. We shall stay at Parma one, and at Turin one, supposing De la Rue to have been successful in taking places with the courier into France for the day on which we want them (he was to

write to bankers at Turin to do it), and then we shall come hard and fast home. I feel almost there already, and shall be delighted to close the pleasant trip, and get back to my own Piccola Camera—if, being English, you understand what *that* is. My best love and kisses to Mamey, Katey, Sydney, Harry, and the noble Plorn. Last, not least, to yourself, and many of them. I will not wait over to-morrow, tell Kate, for her letter; but will write then, whether or no.

Ever, my dearest Georgy,

Most affectionately yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *December 19th*, 1853.

Mr.
Marcus
Stone.

MY DEAR MARCUS,

You made an excellent sketch from a book of mine which I have received (and have preserved) with great pleasure. Will you accept from me, in remembrance of it, *this* little book? I believe it to be true, though it may be sometimes not as genteel as history has a habit of being.

Faithfully yours.

1854.

NARRATIVE.

THE summer of this year was also spent at Boulogne, M. Beaucourt being again the landlord; but the house, though still on the same "property," stood on the top of the hill, above the Moulineaux, and was called the Villa du Camp de Droite.

In the early part of the year Charles Dickens paid several visits to the English provinces, giving readings from his books at many of the large manufacturing

towns, and always for some good and charitable purpose.

He was still at work upon "Hard Times," which was finished during the summer, and was constantly occupied with "Household Words." Many of our letters for this year are to the contributors to this journal. The last is an unusually interesting one. He had for some time past been much charmed with the writings of a certain Miss Berwick, who, he knew, to be a contributor under a feigned name. When at last the lady confided her real name, and he discovered in the young poetess the daughter of his dear friends, Mr.* and Mrs. Procter, the "new sensation" caused him intense surprise, and the greatest pleasure and delight. Miss Adelaide Procter was, from this time, a frequent contributor to "Household Words," more especially to the Christmas numbers.

There are really very few letters in this year requiring any explanation from us—many explaining themselves, and many having allusion to incidents in the past year, which have been duly noted by us for 1853.

The portrait mentioned in the letter to Mr. Collins, for which he was sitting to Mr. E. M. Ward, R.A., was to be one of a series of oil sketches of the then celebrated literary men of the day, in their studies. We believe this portrait to be now in the possession of Mrs. Ward.

In explanation of the letter to Mr. John Saunders on the subject of the production of the latter's play, called "Love's Martyrdom," we will give the dramatist's own words:

* The poet "Barry Cornwall."

“Having printed for private circulation a play entitled ‘Love’s Martyrdom,’ and for which I desired to obtain the independent judgment of some of our most eminent literary men, before seeking the ordeal of the stage, I sent a copy to Mr. Dickens, and the letter in question is his acknowledgment.

* * * * *

“He immediately took steps for the introduction of the play to the theatre. At first he arranged with Mr. Phelps, of Sadler’s Wells, but subsequently, with that gentleman’s consent, removed it to the Haymarket. There it was played with Miss Helen Faucit in the character of Margaret, Miss Swanborough (who shortly after married and left the stage) as Julia, Mr. Barry Sullivan as Franklyn, and Mr. Howe as Laneham.

“As far as the play itself was concerned, it was received on all sides as a genuine dramatic and poetic success, achieved, however, as an eminent critic came to my box to say, through greater difficulties than he had ever before seen a dramatic work pass through. The time has not come for me to speak freely of these, but I may point to two of them: the first being the inadequate rehearsals, which caused Mr. Dickens to tell me on the stage, four or five days only before the first performance, that the play was not then in as good a state as it would have been in at Paris three weeks earlier. The other was the breakdown of the performer of a most important secondary part; a collapse so absolute that he was changed by the management before the second representation of the piece.”

This ill-luck of the beginning, pursued the play to its close.

“The Haymarket Theatre was at the time in the

very lowest state of prostration, through the Crimean War; the habitual frequenters were lovers of comedy, and enjoyers of farce and burlesque; and there was neither the money nor the faith to call to the theatre by the usual methods, vigorously and discriminatingly pursued, the multitudes that I believed could have been so called to a better and more romantic class of comedy.

“Even under these and other similarly depressing circumstances, the nightly receipts were about £60, the expenses being £80; and on the last—an author’s—night, there was an excellent and enthusiastic house, yielding, to the best of my recollection, about £140, but certainly between £120 and £140. And with that night—the sixth or seventh—the experiment ended.”

Mr. Walter
Savage
Landor.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *January 7th*, 1854.

MY DEAR LANDOR,

I heartily assure you that to have your name coupled with anything I have done is an honour and a pleasure to me. I cannot say that I am sorry that you should have thought it necessary to write to me, for it is always delightful to me to see your hand, and to know (though I want no outward and visible sign as an assurance of the fact) that you are ever the same generous, earnest, gallant man.

Catherine and Georgina send their kind loves. So does Walter Landor, who came home from school with high judicial commendation and a prize into the bargain.

Ever, my dear Landor, affectionately yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Friday, January 13th, 1854.*The Hon.
Mrs.
Watson.

MY DEAR MRS. WATSON,

On the very day after I sent the Christmas number to Rockingham, I heard of your being at Brighton. I should have sent another there, but that I had a misgiving I might seem to be making too much of it. For, when I thought of the probability of the Rockingham copy going on to Brighton, and pictured to myself the advent of two of those very large envelopes at once at Junction House at breakfast time, a sort of comic modesty overcame me. I was heartily pleased with the Birmingham audience, which was a very fine one. I never saw, nor do I suppose anybody ever did, such an interesting sight as the working people's night. There were two thousand five hundred of them there, and a more delicately observant audience it is impossible to imagine. They lost nothing, misinterpreted nothing, followed everything closely, laughed and cried with most delightful earnestness, and animated me to that extent that I felt as if we were all bodily going up into the clouds together. It is an enormous place for the purpose; but I had considered all that carefully, and I believe made the most distant person hear as well as if I had been reading in my own room. I was a little doubtful before I began on the first night whether it was quite practicable to conceal the requisite effort; but I soon had the satisfaction of finding that it was, and that we were all going on together, in the first page, as easily, to all appearance, as if we had been sitting round the fire.

I am obliged to go out on Monday at five and to dine out; but I will be at home at any time before

that hour that you may appoint. You say you are only going to stay one night in town; but if you could stay two, and would dine with us alone on Tuesday, *that* is the plan that we should all like best. Let me have one word from you by post on Monday morning. Few things that I saw, when I was away, took my fancy so much as the Electric Telegraph, piercing, like a sunbeam, right through the cruel old heart of the Coliseum at Rome. And on the summit of the Alps, among the eternal ice and snow, there it was still, with its posts sustained against the sweeping mountain winds by clusters of great beams—to say nothing of its being at the bottom of the sea as we crossed the Channel. With kindest loves,

Ever, my dear Mrs. Watson,

Most faithfully yours.

Miss Mary
Boyle.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Monday, January 16th, 1854.*

MY DEAR MARY,

It is all very well to pretend to love me as you do. Ah! If you loved as *I* love, Mary! But, when my breast is tortured by the perusal of such a letter as yours, Falkland, Falkland, madam, becomes my part in "The Rivals," and I play it with desperate earnestness.

As thus:

FALKLAND (*to Acres*). Then you see her, sir, sometimes?

ACRES. See her! Odds beams and sparkles, yes. See her acting! Night after night.

FALKLAND (*aside and furious*). Death and the devil! Acting, and I not there! Pray, sir (*with constrained calmness*), what does she act?

ACRES. Odds, monthly nurses and babbies! Sairey Gamp and Betsey Prig, "which, wotever it is, my dear (*mimicking*), I

likes it brought reg'lar and draw'd mild!" *That's* very like her.

FALKLAND. Confusion! Laceration! Perhaps, sir, perhaps she sometimes acts—ha! ha! perhaps she sometimes acts, I say—eh! sir?—a—ha, ha, ha! a fairy? (*With great bitterness.*)

ACRES. Odds, gauzy pinions and spangles, yes! You should hear her sing as a fairy. You should see her dance as a fairy. Tol de rol lol—la—lol—liddle diddle. (*Sings and dances.*) *That's* very like her.

FALKLAND. Misery! while I, devoted to her image, can scarcely write a line now and then, or pensively read aloud to the people of Birmingham. (*To him.*) And they applaud her, no doubt they applaud her, sir. And she—I see her! Curtsies and smiles! And they—curses on them! they laugh and—ha, ha, ha!—and clap their hands—and say it's very good. Do they not say it's very good, sir? Tell me. Do they not?

ACRES. Odds, thunderings and peelings, of course they do! and the third fiddler, little Tweaks, of the county town, goes into fits. Ho, ho, ho, I can't bear it (*mimicking*); take me out! Ha, ha, ha! O what a one she is! She'll be the death of me. Ha, ha, ha, ha! *That's* very like her!

FALKLAND. Damnation! Heartless Mary! (*Rushes out.*)

Scene opens, and discloses coals of fire, heaped up into form of letters, representing the following inscription:

When the praise thou meetest
To thine ear is sweetest,
O then

REMEMBER JOE!

(*Curtain falls.*)

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Monday, Jan. 16th, 1854.*

M. de
Cerjat

MY DEAR CERJAT,

Guilty. The accused pleads guilty, but throws himself upon the mercy of the court. He humbly represents that his usual hour for getting up, in the course of his travels, was three o'clock in the morning, and his usual hour for going to bed, nine or ten the

next night. That the places in which he chiefly deviated from these rules of hardship, were Rome and Venice; and that at those cities of fame he shut himself up in solitude, and wrote Christmas papers for the incomparable publication known as "Household Words." That his correspondence at all times, arising out of the business of the said "Household Words" alone, was very heavy. That his offence, though undoubtedly committed, was unavoidable, and that a nominal punishment will meet the justice of the case.

We had only three bad days out of the whole time. After Naples, which was very hot, we had very cold, clear, bright weather. When we got to Chamonix, we found the greater part of the inns shut up and the people gone. No visitors whatsoever, and plenty of snow. These were the very best circumstances under which to see the place, and we stayed a couple of days at the Hôtel de Londres (hastily refurbished for our entertainment), and climbed through the snow to the Mer de Glace, and thoroughly enjoyed it. Then we went, in mule procession (I walking) to the old hotel at Martigny, where Collins was ill, and I suppose I bored Egg to death by talking all the evening about the time when you and I were there together. Naples (a place always painful to me, in the intense degradation of the people) seems to have only three classes of inhabitants left in it—priests, soldiers (standing army one hundred thousand strong), and spies. Of macaroni we ate very considerable quantities everywhere; also, for the benefit of Italy, we took our share of every description of wine. At Naples I found Layard, the Nineveh traveller, who is a friend of mine and an admirable fellow; so we fraternised and went

up Vesuvius together, and ate more macaroni and drank more wine. At Rome, the day after our arrival, they were making a saint at St. Peter's; on which occasion I was surprised to find what an immense number of pounds of wax candles it takes to make the regular, genuine article. From Turin to Paris, over the Mont Cenis, we made only one journey. The Rhone, being frozen and foggy, was not to be navigated, so we posted from Lyons to Chalons, and everybody else was doing the like, and there were no horses to be got, and we were stranded at midnight in amazing little cabarets, with nothing worth mentioning to eat in them, except the iron stove, which was rusty, and the billiard-table, which was musty. We left Turin on a Tuesday evening, and arrived in Paris on a Friday evening; where I found my son Charley, hot—or I should rather say cold—from Germany, with his arms and legs so grown out of his coat and trousers, that I was ashamed of him, and was reduced to the necessity of taking him, under cover of night, to a ready-made establishment in the Palais Royal, where they put him into balloon-waisted pantaloons, and increased my confusion. Leaving Calais on the evening of Sunday, the 10th of December; fact of distinguished author's being aboard, was telegraphed to Dover; thereupon authorities of Dover Railway detained train to London for distinguished author's arrival, rather to the exasperation of British public. D. A. arrived at home between ten and eleven that night, thank God, and found all well and happy.

I think you see *The Times*, and if so, you will have seen a very graceful and good account of the Birmingham readings. It was the most remarkable

thing that England could produce, I think, in the way of a vast intelligent assemblage; and the success was most wonderful and prodigious—perfectly overwhelming and astounding altogether. They wound up by giving my wife a piece of plate, having given me one before; and when you come to dine here (may it be soon!) it shall be duly displayed in the centre of the table.

Tell Mrs. Cerjat, to whom my love, and all our loves, that I have highly excited them at home here by giving them an account in detail of all your daughters; further, that the way in which Catherine and Georgina have questioned me and cross-questioned me about you all, notwithstanding, is maddening. Mrs. Watson has been obliged to pass her Christmas at Brighton alone with her younger children, in consequence of her two eldest boys coming home to Rockingham from school with the whooping-cough. The quarantine expires to-day, however; and she drives here, on her way back into Northamptonshire, to-morrow.

The sad affair of the Preston strike remains unsettled; and I hear, on strong authority, that if that were settled, the Manchester people are prepared to strike next. Provisions very dear, but the people very temperate and quiet in general. So ends this jumble, which looks like the index to a chapter in a book, I find, when I read it over.

Ever, my dear Cerjat, heartily your Friend.

Mr.
Arthur
Ryland.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *January 18th, 1854.*

MY DEAR SIR,

I am quite delighted to find that you are so well satisfied, and that the enterprise has such a light upon

it. I think I never was better pleased in my life than I was with my Birmingham friends.

That principle of fair representation of all orders carefully carried out, I believe, will do more good than any of us can yet foresee. Does it not seem a strange thing to consider that I have never yet seen with these eyes of mine, a mechanic in any recognised position on the platform of a Mechanics' Institution?

Mr. Wills may be expected to sink, shortly, under the ravages of letters from all parts of England, Ireland, and Scotland, proposing readings. He keeps up his spirits, but I don't see how they are to carry him through.

Mrs. Dickens and Miss Hogarth beg their kindest regards; and I am, my dear sir, with much regard, too,

Very faithfully yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *January 30th*, 1854.

Mr.
Charles
Knight.

MY DEAR KNIGHT,

Indeed there is no fear of my thinking you the owner of a cold heart. I am more than three parts disposed, however, to be ferocious with you for ever writing down such a preposterous truism.

My satire is against those who see figures and averages, and nothing else—the representatives of the wickedest and most enormous vice of this time—the men who, through long years to come, will do more to damage the real useful truths of political economy than I could do (if I tried) in my whole life; the addled heads who would take the average of cold in the Crimea during twelve months as a reason for clothing a soldier in nankeens on a night when he

would be frozen to death in fur, and who would comfort the labourer in travelling twelve miles a day to and from his work, by telling him that the average distance of one inhabited place from another in the whole area of England, is not more than four miles. Bah! What have you to do with these?

I shall put the book upon a private shelf (after reading it) by "Once upon a Time." I should have buried my pipe of peace and sent you this blast of my war-horn three or four days ago, but that I have been reading to a little audience of three thousand five hundred at Bradford.

Ever affectionately yours.

Rev.
James
White.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Tuesday, March 7th, 1854.*

MY DEAR WHITE,

I am tardy in answering your letter; but "Hard Times," and an immense amount of enforced correspondence, are my excuse. To you a sufficient one, I know.

As I should judge from outward and visible appearances, I have exactly as much chance of seeing the Russian fleet reviewed by the Czar as I have of seeing the English fleet reviewed by the Queen.

"Club Law" made me laugh very much when I went over it in the proof yesterday. It is most capitally done, and not (as I feared it might be) too directly. It is in the next number but one.

Mrs.———has gone stark mad—and stark naked—on the spirit-rapping imposition. She was found t'other day in the street, clothed only in her chastity, a pocket-handkerchief and a visiting card. She had been informed, it appeared, by the spirits, that if she

went out in that trim she would be invisible. She is now in a madhouse, and, I fear, hopelessly insane. One of the curious manifestations of her disorder is that she can bear nothing black. There is a terrific business to be done, even when they are obliged to put coals on her fire.

—— has a thing called a Psycho-grapher, which writes at the dictation of spirits. It delivered itself, a few nights ago, of this extraordinarily lucid message:

X. Y. Z!

upon which it was gravely explained by the true believers that "the spirits were out of temper about something." Said —— had a great party on Sunday, when it was rumoured "a count was going to raise the dead." I stayed till the ghostly hour, but the rumour was unfounded, for neither count nor plebeian came up to the spiritual scratch. It is really inexplicable to me that a man of his calibre can be run away with by such small deer.

A propos of spiritual messages comes in Georgina, and, hearing that I am writing to you, delivers the following enigma to be conveyed to Mrs. White:

"Wyon of the Mint lives *at* the Mint."

Feeling my brain going after this, I only trust it with loves from all to all. Ever faithfully.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *March 17th*, 1854.

Mr.
Charles
Knight.

MY DEAR KNIGHT,

I have read the article with much interest. It is most conscientiously done, and presents a great mass of curious information condensed into a surprisingly small space.

I have made a slight note or two here and there, with a soft pencil, so that a touch of indiarubber will make all blank again.

And I earnestly entreat your attention to the point (I have been working upon it, weeks past, in "Hard Times") which I have jocosely suggested on the last page but one. The English are, so far as I know, the hardest-worked people on whom the sun shines. Be content if, in their wretched intervals of pleasure, they read for amusement and do no worse. They are born at the oar, and they live and die at it. Good God, what would we have of them!

Affectionately yours always.

Mr. W. H.
Wills.

OFFICE OF "HOUSEHOLD WORDS,"

No. 16, WELLINGTON STREET, NORTH STRAND,

Wednesday, April 12th, 1854.

* * * * *

I know all the walks for many and many miles round about Malvern, and delightful walks they are. I suppose you are already getting very stout, very red, very jovial (in a physical point of view) altogether.

Mark and I walked to Dartford from Greenwich, last Monday, and found Mrs. —— acting "The Stranger" (with a strolling company from the Standard Theatre) in Mr. Munn's schoolroom. The stage was a little wider than your table here, and its surface was composed of loose boards laid on the school forms. Dogs sniffed about it during the performances, and *the* carpenter's highlows were ostentatiously taken off and displayed in the proscenium.

We stayed until a quarter to ten, when we were obliged to fly to the railroad, but we sent the landlord of the hotel down with the following articles:

1 bottle superior old port,
1 do. do. golden sherry,
1 do. do. best French brandy,
1 do. do. 1st quality old Tom gin,
1 do. do. prime Jamaica rum,
1 do. do. small still *Isla* whiskey,
1 kettle boiling water, two pounds finest
white lump sugar,

Our cards,

1 lemon,

and

Our compliments.

The effect we had previously made upon the theatrical company by being beheld in the first two chairs—there was nearly a pound in the house—was altogether electrical.

My ladies send their kindest regards, and are disappointed at your not saying that you drink two-and-twenty tumblers of the limpid element, every day. The children also unite in "loves," and the Plornishghenter, on being asked if he would send his, replies "Yes—man," which we understand to signify cordial acquiescence.

Forster just come back from lecturing at Sherborne. Describes said lecture as "Blaze of Triumph."

H. W. AGAIN.

Miss—I mean Mrs.—Bell's story very nice. I have sent it to the printer, and entitled it "The Green Ring and the Gold Ring."

This apartment looks desolate in your absence;
but, O Heavens, how tidy!

F. W.

Mrs. Wills supposed to have gone into a convent at Somers Town.

My dear Wills,
Ever faithfully yours.

Mr. B. W.
Procter.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Saturday Night, April 15th, 1854.*

MY DEAR PROCTER,

I have read the "Fatal Revenge." Don't do what the minor theatrical people call "despi-ser" me, but I think it's very bad. The concluding narrative is by far the most meritorious part of the business. Still, the people are so very convulsive and tumble down so many places, and are always knocking other people's bones about in such a very irrational way, that I object. The way in which earth-quakes won't swallow the monsters, and volcanoes in eruption won't boil them, is extremely aggravating. Also their habit of bolting when they are going to explain anything.

You have sent me a very different and a much better book; and for that I am truly grateful. With the dust of "Maturin" in my eyes, I sat down and read "The Death of Friends," and the dust melted away in some of those tears it is good to shed. I remember to have read "The Back-room Window" some years ago, and I have associated it with you ever since. It is a most delightful paper. But the two volumes are all delightful, and I have put them on a shelf where you sit down with Charles Lamb again, with Talfourd's vindication of him hard by.

We never meet. I hope it is not irreligious, but in this strange London I have an inclination to adapt a

portion of the Church Service to our common experience. Thus:

"We have left unmet the people whom we ought to have met, and we have met the people whom we ought not to have met, and there seems to be no help in us."

But I am always, my dear Procter,

(At a distance),

Very cordially yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *April 21st*, 1854.

Mrs.
Gaskell.

MY DEAR MRS. GASKELL,

I safely received the paper from Mr. Shaen, welcomed it with three cheers, and instantly despatched it to the printer, who has it in hand now.

I have no intention of striking. The monstrous claims at domination made by a certain class of manufacturers, and the extent to which the way is made easy for working men to slide down into discontent under such hands, are within my scheme; but I am not going to strike, so don't be afraid of me. But I wish you would look at the story yourself, and judge where and how near I seem to be approaching what you have in your mind. The first two months of it will show that.

I will "make my will" on the first favourable occasion. We were playing games last night, and were fearfully clever. With kind regards to Mr. Gaskell, always, my dear Mrs. Gaskell, Faithfully yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *May 30th*, 1854.

Mr. Frank
Stone,
A.R.A.

MY DEAR STONE,

I cannot stand a total absence of ventilation, and I should have liked (in an amiable and persuasive man-

mer) to have punched ——'s head, and opened the register stoves. I saw the supper tables, sir, in an empty state, and was charmed with them. Likewise I recovered myself from a swoon, occasioned by long contact with an unventilated man of a strong flavour from Copenhagen, by drinking an unknown species of celestial lemonade in that enchanted apartment.

I am grieved to say that on Saturday I stand engaged to dine, at three weeks' notice, with one ——, a man who has read every book that ever was written, and is a perfect gulf of information. Before exploding a mine of knowledge he has a habit of closing one eye and wrinkling up his nose, so that he seems perpetually to be taking aim at you and knocking you over with a terrific charge. Then he looks again, and takes another aim. So you are always on your back, with your legs in the air.

How can a man be conversed with, or walked with, in the county of Middlesex, when he is reviewing the Kentish Militia on the shores of Dover, or sailing, every day for three weeks, between Dover and Calais?

Ever affectionately.

P.S.—“Humphry Clinker” is certainly Smollett's best. I am rather divided between “Peregrine Pickle” and “Roderick Random,” both extraordinarily good in their way, which is a way without tenderness; but you will have to read them both, and I send the first volume of “Peregrine” as the richer of the two.

Mr. Peter
Cunning-
ham.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *June 7th*, 1854.

MY DEAR CUNNINGHAM,

I cannot become one of the committee for Wilson's statue, after entertaining so strong an opinion against the

expediency of such a memorial in poor dear Talfourd's case. But I will subscribe my three guineas, and will pay that sum to the account at Coutts's when I go there next week, before leaving town.

"The Goldsmiths" admirably done throughout. It is a book I have long desired to see done, and never expected to see half so well done. Many thanks to you for it.

Ever faithfully yours.

P.S.—Please to observe the address at Boulogne: "Villa du Camp de Droite."

VILLA DU CAMP DE DROITE, *Thursday, June 22nd, 1854.* Mr. W. H. Wills.

MY DEAR WILLS,

I have nothing to say, but having heard from you this morning, think I may as well report all well.

We have a most charming place here. It beats the former residence all to nothing. We have a beautiful garden, with all its fruits and flowers, and a field of our own, and a road of our own away to the Column, and everything that is airy and fresh. The great Beaucourt hovers about us like a guardian genius, and I imagine that no English person in a carriage could by any possibility find the place.

Of the wonderful inventions and contrivances with which a certain inimitable creature has made the most of it, I will say nothing, until you have an opportunity of inspecting the same. At present I will only observe that I have written exactly seventy-two words of "Hard Times," since I have been here.

The children arrived on Tuesday night, by London boat, in every stage and aspect of sea-sickness.

The camp is about a mile off, and huts are now building for (they say) sixty thousand soldiers. I don't imagine it to be near enough to bother us.

If the weather ever should be fine, it might do you good sometimes to come over with the proofs on a Saturday, when the tide serves well, before you and Mrs. W. make your annual visit. Recollect there is always a bed, and no sudden appearance will put us out.

Kind regards.

Ever faithfully.

Mr. W.
Wilkie
Collins.

VILLA DU CAMP DE DROITE, BOULOGNE,

Wednesday Night, July 12th, 1854.

MY DEAR COLLINS,

Bobbing up, corkwise, from a sea of "Hard Times," I beg to report this tenement—AMAZING!!! Range of view and air, most free and delightful; hill-side garden, delicious; field, stupendous; speculations in haycocks already effected by the undersigned, with the view to the keeping up of a "home" at rounders.

I hope to finish and get to town by next Wednesday night, the 19th; what do you say to coming back with me on the following Tuesday? The interval I propose to pass in a career of amiable dissipation and unbounded license in the metropolis. If you will come and breakfast with me about midnight—anywhere—any day, and go to bed no more until we fly to these pastoral retreats, I shall be delighted to have so vicious an associate.

Will you undertake to let Ward know that if he still wishes me to sit to him, he shall have me as long as he likes, at Tavistock House, on Monday, the 24th, from ten A.M.?

I have made it understood here that we shall want to be taken the greatest care of this summer, and to be fed on nourishing meats. Several new dishes have been rehearsed and have come out very well. I have met with what they call in the City "a parcel" of the celebrated 1846 champagne. It is a very fine wine, and calculated to do us good when weak.

The camp is about a mile off. Voluptuous English authors reposing from their literary fatigues (on their laurels) are expected, when all other things fail, to lie on straw in the midst of it when the days are sunny, and stare at the blue sea until they fall asleep. (About one hundred and fifty soldiers have been at various times billeted on Beaucourt since we have been here, and he has clinked glasses with them every one, and read a MS. book of his father's, on soldiers in general, to them all.)

I shall be glad to hear what you say to these various proposals. I write with the Emperor in the town, and a great expenditure of tricolour floating thereabouts, but no stir makes its way to this inaccessible retreat. It is like being up in a balloon. Lionising Englishmen and Germans start to call, and are found lying imbecile in the road half-way up. Ha! ha! ha!

Kindest regards from all. The Plornishghenter adds Mr. and Mrs. Goose's duty. Ever faithfully.

P.S.—The cobbler has been ill these many months, and unable to work; has had a carbuncle in his back, and has it cut three times a week. The little dog sits at the door so unhappy and anxious to help, that I every day expect to see him beginning a pair of top boots.

Miss
Hogarth.

OFFICE OF "HOUSEHOLD WORDS," *Saturday, July 22nd, 1854.*

MY DEAR GEORGINA,

Neither you nor Catherine did justice to Collins's book.* I think it far away the cleverest novel I have ever seen written by a new hand. It is in some respects masterly. "Valentine Blyth" is as original, and as well done as anything can be. The scene where he shows his pictures is full of an admirable humour. Old Mat is admirably done. In short, I call it a very remarkable book, and have been very much surprised by its great merit.

Tell Kate, with my love, that she will receive to-morrow in a little parcel, the complete proofs of "Hard Times." They will not be corrected, but she will find them pretty plain. I am just now going to put them up for her. I saw Grisi the night before last in "Lucrezia Borgia"—finer than ever. Last night I was drinking gin-slugs till day-light, with Buckstone of all people, who saw me looking at the Spanish dancers, and insisted on being convivial. I have been in a blaze of dissipation altogether, and have succeeded (I think), in knocking the remembrance of my work out.

Loves to all the darlings, from the Plornish-Maroon upward. London is far hotter than Naples.

Ever affectionately.

Mrs.
Gaskell.

VILLA DU CAMP DE DROITE, BOULOGNE,

Thursday, Aug. 17th, 1854.

MY DEAR MRS. GASKELL,

I sent your MS. off to Wills yesterday, with instructions to forward it to you without delay. I hope

* "Hide and Seek."

you will have received it before this notification comes to hand.

The usual festivity of this place at present—which is the blessing of soldiers by the ten thousand—has just now been varied by the baptising of some new bells, lately hung up (to my sorrow and lunacy) in a neighbouring church. An English lady was godmother; and there was a procession afterwards, wherein an English gentleman carried “the relics” in a highly suspicious box, like a barrel organ; and innumerable English ladies in white gowns and bridal wreaths walked two and two, as if they had all gone to school again.

At a review, on the same day, I was particularly struck by the commencement of the proceedings, and its singular contrast to the usual military operations in Hyde Park. Nothing would induce the general commanding in chief to begin, until chairs were brought for all the lady-spectators. And a detachment of about a hundred men deployed into all manner of farm-houses to find the chairs. Nobody seemed to lose any dignity by the transaction, either.

With kindest regards, my dear Mrs. Gaskell,
Faithfully yours always.

VILLA DU CAMP DE DROITE, BOULOGNE,

Saturday, Aug. 19th, 1854.

Rev.
William
Harness.

MY DEAR HARNESS,

Yes. The book came from me. I could not put a memorandum to that effect on the title-page, in consequence of my being here.

I am heartily glad you like it. I know the piece you mention, but am far from being convinced by it.

A great misgiving is upon me, that in many things (this thing among the rest) too many are martyrs to *our* complacency and satisfaction, and that we must give up something thereof for their poor sakes.

My kindest regards to your sister, and my love (if I may send it) to another of your relations.

Always, very faithfully yours.

Mr. Henry
Austin.

VILLA DU CAMP DE DROITE, BOULOGNE,

Wednesday, Sept. 6th, 1854.

* * * * *

Any Saturday on which the tide serves your purpose (next Saturday excepted) will suit me for the flying visit you hint at; and we shall be delighted to see you. Although the camp is not above a mile from this gate, we never see or hear of it, unless we choose. If you could come here in dry weather you would find it as pretty, airy, and pleasant a situation as you ever saw. We illuminated the whole front of the house last night—eighteen windows—and an immense palace of light was seen sparkling on this hill-top for miles and miles away. I rushed to a distance to look at it, and never saw anything of the same kind half so pretty.

The town* looks like one immense flag, it is so decked out with streamers; and as the royal yacht approached yesterday—the whole range of the cliff tops lined with troops, and the artillery matches in hand, all ready to fire the great guns the moment she made the harbour; the sailors standing up in the prow of the yacht, the Prince in a blazing uniform, left alone on the deck for everybody to see—a stupendous

* On the occasion of the Prince Consort's visit to the camp at Boulogne.

silence, and then such an infernal blazing and banging as never was heard. It was almost as fine a sight as one could see under a deep blue sky. In our own proper illumination I laid on all the servants, all the children now at home, all the visitors (it is the annual "Household Words" time), one to every window, with everything ready to light up on the ringing of a big dinner-bell by your humble correspondent. St. Peter's on Easter Monday was the result.

Best love from all.

Ever affectionately.

BOULOGNE, *Tuesday, Sept. 26th, 1854.*

Mr. W.
Wilkie
Collins.

MY DEAR COLLINS,

First, I have to report that I received your letter with much pleasure.

Secondly, that the weather has entirely changed. It is so cool that we have not only a fire in the drawing-room regularly, but another to dine by. The delicious freshness of the air is charming, and it is generally bright and windy besides.

Thirdly, that——'s intellectual faculties appear to have developed suddenly. He has taken to borrowing money; from which I infer (as he has no intention whatever of repaying) that his mental powers are of a high order. Having got a franc from me, he fell upon Mrs. Dickens for five sous. She declining to enter into the transaction, he beleaguered that feeble little couple, Harry and Sydney, into paying two sous each for "tickets" to behold the ravishing spectacle of an utterly-non-existent-and-there-fore-impossible-to-be-produced toy theatre. He eats stony apples, and harbours designs upon his fellow-creatures until he has become

light-headed. From the couch rendered uneasy by this disorder he has arisen with an excessively protuberant forehead, a dull slow eye, a complexion of a leaden hue, and a croaky voice. He has become a horror to me, and I resort to the most cowardly expedients to avoid meeting him. He, on the other hand, wanting another franc, dodges me round those trees at the corner, and at the back door; and I have a presentiment upon me that I shall fall a sacrifice to his cupidity at last.

On the Sunday night after you left, or rather on the Monday morning at half-past one, Mary was taken *very ill*. English cholera. She was sinking so fast, and the sickness was so exceedingly alarming, that it evidently would not do to wait for Elliotson. I caused everything to be done that we had naturally often thought of, in a lonely house so full of children, and fell back upon the old remedy; though the difficulty of giving even it was rendered very great by the frightful sickness. Thank God, she recovered so favourably that by breakfast time she was fast asleep. She slept twenty-four hours, and has never had the least uneasiness since. I heard—of course afterwards—that she had had an attack of sickness two nights before. I think that long ride and those late dinners had been too much for her. Without them I am inclined to doubt whether she would have been ill.

Last Sunday as ever was, the theatre took fire at halfpast eleven in the forenoon. Being close by the English church, it showered hot sparks into that temple through the open windows. Whereupon the congregation shrieked and rose and tumbled out into the street;——benignly observing to the only ancient female who

would listen to him, "I fear we must part;" and afterwards being beheld in the street—in his robes and with a kind of sacred wildness on him—handing ladies over the kennel into shops and other structures, where they had no business whatever, or the least desire to go. I got to the back of the theatre, where I could see in through some great doors that had been forced open, and whence the spectacle of the whole interior, burning like a red-hot cavern, was really very fine, even in the day-light. Meantime the soldiers were at work, "saving" the scenery by pitching it into the next street; and the poor little properties (one spinning-wheel, a feeble imitation of a water-mill, and a basketful of the dimmest artificial flowers very conspicuous) were being passed from hand to hand with the greatest excitement, as if they were rescued children or lovely women. In four or five hours the whole place was burnt down, except the outer walls. Never in my days did I behold such feeble endeavours in the way of extinguishment. On an average I should say it took ten minutes to throw half a gallon of water on the great roaring heap; and every time it was insulted in this way it gave a ferocious burst, and everybody ran off. Beaucourt has been going about for two days in a clean collar; which phenomenon evidently means something, but I don't know what. Elliotson reports that the great conjuror lives at his hotel, has extra wine every day, and fares expensively. Is he the devil?

I have heard from the Kernel.* Wa'al, sir, sayin' as he minded to locate himself with us for a week, I expected to have heard from him again this morning, but have not. Beard comes to-morrow.

* Mr. Egg.

Kindest regards and remembrances from all. Ward lives in a little street between the two Tintilleries. The Plornish-Maroon desires his duty. He had a fall yesterday, through overbalancing himself in kicking his nurse.

Ever faithfully.

Mr. Frank
Stone,
A.R.A.

BOULOGNE, *Friday, Oct. 13th, 1854.*

MY DEAR STONE,

Having some little matters that rather press on my attention to see to in town, I have made up my mind to relinquish the walking project, and come straight home (by way of Folkestone) on Tuesday. I shall be due in town at midnight, and shall hope to see you next day, with the top of your coat-collar mended.

Everything that happens here we suppose to be an announcement of the taking of Sebastopol. When a church-clock strikes, we think it is the joy-bell, and fly out of the house in a burst of nationality—to sneak in again. If they practise firing at the camp, we are sure it is the artillery celebrating the fall of the Russian, and we become enthusiastic in a moment. I live in constant readiness to illuminate the whole house. Whatever anybody says I believe; everybody says, every day, that Sebastopol is in flames. Sometimes the Commander-in-Chief has blown himself up, with seventy-five thousand men. Sometimes he has “cut” his way through Lord Raglan, and has fallen back on the advancing body of the Russians, one hundred and forty-two thousand strong, whom he is going to “bring up” (I don’t know where from, or how, or when, or why) for the destruction of the Allies. All these things, in the words of the catechism, “I steadfastly believe,” until I

become a mere driveller, a moonstruck, babbling, staring, credulous, imbecile, greedy, gaping, wooden-headed, addle-brained, wool-gathering, dreary, vacant, obstinate civilian.

Ever, my fellow-countryman, affectionately.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *October 26th*, 1854. Mr. John
Saunders.

DEAR SIR,

I have had much gratification and pleasure in the receipt of your obliging communication. Allow me to thank you for it, in the first place, with great cordiality.

Although I cannot say that I came without any prepossessions to the perusal of your play (for I had favourable inclinations towards it before I began), I *can* say that I read it with the closest attention, and that it inspired me with a strong interest, and a genuine and high admiration. The parts that involve some of the greatest difficulties of your task appear to me those in which you shine most. I would particularly instance the end of Julia as a very striking example of this. The delicacy and beauty of her redemption from her weak rash lover, are very far indeed beyond the range of any ordinary dramatist, and display the true poetical strength.

As your hopes now centre in Mr. Phelps, and in seeing the child of your fancy on his stage, I will venture to point out to you not only what I take to be very dangerous portions of "Love's Martyrdom" as it stands, *for presentation on the stage*, but portions which I believe Mr. Phelps will speedily regard in that light when he sees it before him in the persons of live men and women on the wooden boards. Knowing him, I

think he will be then as violently discouraged as he is now generously exalted; and it may be useful to you to be prepared for the consideration of those passages.

I do not regard it as a great stumbling-block that the play of modern times best known to an audience proceeds upon the main idea of this, namely, that there was a hunchback who, because of his deformity, mistrusted himself. But it is certainly a grain in the balance when the balance is going the wrong way, and therefore it should be most carefully trimmed. The incident of the ring is an insignificant one to look at over a row of gaslights, is difficult to convey to an audience, and the least thing will make it ludicrous. If it be so well done by Mr. Phelps himself as to be otherwise than ludicrous, it will be disagreeable. If it be either, it will be perilous, and doubly so, because you revert to it. The quarrel scene between the two brothers in the third act is now so long that the justification of blind passion and impetuosity—which can alone bear out Franklyn, before the bodily eyes of a great concourse of spectators, in plunging at the life of his own brother—is lost. That the two should be parted, and that Franklyn should again drive at him, and strike him, and then wound him, is a state of things to set the sympathy of an audience in the wrong direction, and turn it from the man you make happy to the man you leave unhappy. I would on no account allow the artist to appear, attended by that picture, more than once. All the most sudden inconstancy of Clarence I would soften down. Margaret must act much better than any actress I have ever seen, if all her lines fall in pleasant places; therefore, I think she needs compression too.

All this applies solely to the theatre. If you ever revise the sheets for readers, will you note in the margin the broken laughter and the appeals to the Deity? If, on summing them up, you find you want them all, I would leave them as they stand by all means. If not, I would blot accordingly.

It is only in the hope of being slightly useful to you by anticipating what I believe Mr. Phelps will discover—or what, if ever he should pass it, I have a strong conviction the audience will find out—that I have ventured on these few hints. Your concurrence with them generally, on reconsideration, or your preference for the poem as it stands, can not in the least affect my interest in your success. On the other hand, I have a perfect confidence in your not taking my misgivings ill; they arise out of my sincere desire for the triumph of your work.

With renewed thanks for the pleasure you have afforded me,

I am, dear Sir, faithfully yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *November 1st, 1854.*

(And a constitutionally foggy day.)

Mr. W. C.
Macready.

MY DEAREST MACREADY,

I thought it better not to encumber the address to working men with details. Firstly, because they would detract from whatever fiery effect the words may have in them; secondly, because writing and petitioning and pressing a subject upon members and candidates are now so clearly understood; and thirdly, because the paper was meant as an opening to a persistent pressure of the whole question on the public, which would yield other opportunities of touching on such points.

In the number *for next week*—not this—is one of those following-up articles called “A Home Question.” It is not written by me, but is generally of my suggesting, and is exceedingly well done by a thorough and experienced hand. I think you will find in it, generally, what you want. I have told the printers to send you a proof by post as soon as it is corrected—that is to say, as soon as some insertions I made in it last night are in type and in their places.

My dear old Parr, I don't believe a word you write about King John! That is to say, I don't believe you take into account the enormous difference between the energy summonable-up in your study at Sherborne and the energy that will fire up in you (without so much as saying “With your leave” or “By your leave”) in the Town Hall at Birmingham. I know you, you ancient codger, I know you! Therefore I will trouble you to be so good as to do an act of honesty after you have been to Birmingham, and to write to me, “Ingenuous boy, you were correct. I find I could have read 'em ‘King John’ with the greatest ease.”

In that vast hall in the busy town of Sherborne, in which our illustrious English novelist is expected to read next month—though he is strongly of opinion that he is deficient in power, and too old—I wonder what accommodation there is for reading! because our illustrious countryman likes to stand at a desk breast-high, with plenty of room about him, a sloping top, and a ledge to keep his book from tumbling off. If such a thing should not be there, however, on his arrival, I suppose even a Sherborne carpenter could knock it up out of a deal board. *Is there a deal board in*

Sherborne though? I should like to hear Katey's opinion on that point.

In this week's "Household Words" there is an exact portrait of our Boulogne landlord, which I hope you will like. I think of opening the next long book I write with a man of juvenile figure and strong face, who is always persuading himself that he is infirm. What do you think of the idea? I should like to have your opinion about it. I would make him an impetuous passionate sort of fellow, devilish grim upon occasion, and of an iron purpose. Droll, I fancy?

—— is getting a little too fat, but appears to be troubled by the great responsibility of directing the whole war. He doesn't seem to be quite clear that he has got the ships into the exact order he intended, on the sea point of attack at Sebastopol. We went to the play last Saturday night with Stanfield, whose "high lights" (as Maclise calls those knobs of brightness on the top of his cheeks) were more radiant than ever. We talked of you, and I told Stanny how they are imitating his "Acis and Galatea" sea in "Pericles," at Phelps's. He didn't half like it; but I added, in nautical language, that it was merely a piratical effort achieved by a handful of porpoise-faced swabs, and that brought him up with a round turn, as we say at sea.

We are looking forward to the twentieth of next month with great pleasure. All Tavistock House send love and kisses to all Sherborne House. If there is anything I can bring down for you, let me know in good course of time.

Ever, my dearest Macready,

Most affectionately yours.

The Hon.
Mrs.
Watson.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Wednesday, Nov. 1st, 1854.*

MY DEAR MRS. WATSON,

I take upon myself to answer your letter to Catherine, as I am referred to in it.

The "Walk" is not my writing. It is very well done by a close imitator. Why I found myself so "used up" after "Hard Times" I scarcely know, perhaps because I intended to do nothing in that way for a year, when the idea laid hold of me by the throat in a very violent manner, and because the compression and close condensation necessary for that disjointed form of publication gave me perpetual trouble. But I really was tired, which is a result so very incomprehensible that I can't forget it. I have passed an idle autumn in a beautiful situation, and am dreadfully brown and big. For further particulars of Boulogne, see "Our French Watering Place," in this present week of "Household Words," which contains a faithful portrait of our landlord there.

If you carry out that bright Croydon idea, rely on our glad co-operation, only let me know all about it a few days beforehand; and if you feel equal to the contemplation of the moustache (which has been cut lately) it will give us the heartiest pleasure to come and meet you. This in spite of the terrific duffery of the Crystal Palace. It is a very remarkable thing in itself; but to have so very large a building continually crammed down one's throat, and to find it a new page in "The Whole Duty of Man" to go there, is a little more than even I (and you know how amiable I am) can endure.

You always like to know what I am going to do,

so I beg to announce that on the 19th of December I am going to read the "Carol" at Reading, where I undertook the presidency of the Literary Institution on the death of poor dear Talfourd. Then I am going on to Sherborne, in Dorsetshire, to do the like for another institution, which is one of the few remaining pleasures of Macready's life. Then I am coming home for Christmas Day. Then I believe I must go to Bradford, in Yorkshire, to read once more to a little fire-side party of four thousand. Then I am coming home again to get up a new little version of "The Children in the Wood" (yet to be written, by-the-bye), for the children to act on Charley's birthday.

I am full of mixed feeling about the war—admiration of our valiant men, burning desires to cut the Emperor of Russia's throat, and something like despair to see how the old cannon-smoke and blood-mists obscure the wrongs and sufferings of the people at home. When I consider the Patriotic Fund on the one hand, and on the other the poverty and wretchedness engendered by cholera, of which in London alone, an infinitely larger number of English people than are likely to be slain in the whole Russian war have miserably and needlessly died—I feel as if the world had been pushed back five hundred years. If you are reading new books just now, I think you will be interested with a controversy between Whewell and Brewster, on the question of the shining orbs about us being inhabited or no. Whewell's book is called, "On the Plurality of Worlds;" Brewster's, "More Worlds than One." I shouldn't wonder if you know all about them. They bring together a vast number of points of great interest in natural philosophy, and some very

curious reasoning on both sides, and leave the matter pretty much where it was.

We had a fine absurdity in connection with our luggage, when we left Boulogne. The barometer had within a few hours fallen about a foot, in honour of the occasion, and it was a tremendous night, blowing a gale of wind and raining a little deluge. The luggage (pretty heavy, as you may suppose), in a cart drawn by two horses, stuck fast in a rut in our field, and couldn't be moved. Our man, made a lunatic by the extremity of the occasion, ran down to the town to get two more horses to help it out, when he returned with those horses and carter B, the most beaming of men; carter A, who had been soaking all the time by the disabled vehicle, descried in carter B the acknowledged enemy of his existence, took his own two horses out, and walked off with them! After which, the whole set-out remained in the field all night, and we came to town, thirteen individuals, with one comb and a pocket-handkerchief. I was upside-down during the greater part of the passage.

Dr. Rae's account of Franklin's unfortunate party is deeply interesting; but I think hasty in its acceptance of the details, particularly in the statement that they had eaten the dead bodies of their companions, which I don't believe. Franklin, on a former occasion, was almost starved to death, had gone through all the pains of that sad end, and lain down to die, and no such thought had presented itself to any of them. In famous cases of shipwreck, it is very rare indeed that any person of any humanising education or refinement resorts to this dreadful means of prolonging life. In open boats, the coarsest and commonest men of the

shipwrecked party have done such things; but I don't remember more than one instance in which an officer had overcome the loathing that the idea had inspired. Dr. Rae talks about their *cooking* these remains too. I should like to know where the fuel came from.

Kindest love and best regards.

Ever, my dear Mrs. Watson, affectionately yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Friday Night, Nov. 3rd, 1854.*

Mr.
Clarkson
Stanfield,
R.A.

MY DEAR STANNY,

First of all, here is enclosed a letter for Mrs. Stanfield, which, if you don't immediately and faithfully deliver, you will hear of in an unpleasant way from the station-house at the curve of the hill above you.

Secondly, this is not to remind you that we meet at the Athenæum next Monday at five, because none but a mouldy swab as never broke biscuit or lay out on the for'sel-yard-arm in a gale of wind ever forgot an appointment with a messmate.

But what I want you to think of at your leisure is this: when our dear old Macready was in town last, I saw it would give him so much interest and pleasure if I promised to go down and read my "Christmas Carol" to the little Sherborne Institution, which is now one of the few active objects he has in the life about him, that I came out with that promise in a bold—I may say a swaggering way. Consequently, on Wednesday, the 20th of December, I am going down to see him, with Kate and Georgina, returning to town in good time for Christmas, on Saturday, the 23rd. Do you think you could manage to go and return with us? I really believe there is scarcely anything in the world that would give him such extraordinary pleasure as

such a visit; and if you would empower me to send him an intimation that he may expect it, he will have a daily joy in looking forward to the time (I am seriously sure) which we—whose light has not gone out, and who are among our old dear pursuits and associations—can scarcely estimate.

I don't like to broach the idea in a careless way, and so I propose it thus, and ask you to think of it.

Ever most affectionately yours.

Miss
Procter.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Sunday, Dec. 17th, 1854.*

MY DEAR MISS PROCTER,

You have given me a new sensation. I did suppose that nothing in this singular world could surprise me, but you have done it.

You will believe my congratulations on the delicacy and talent of your writing to be sincere. From the first, I have always had an especial interest in that Miss Berwick, and have over and over again questioned Wills about her. I suppose he has gone on gradually building up an imaginary structure of life and adventure for her, but he has given me the strangest information! Only yesterday week, when we were "making up" "The Poor Travellers," as I sat meditatively poking the office fire, I said to him, "Wills, have you got that Miss Berwick's proof back, of the little sailor's song?" "No," he said. "Well, but why not?" I asked him. "Why, you know," he answered "as I have often told you before, she don't live at the place to which her letters are addressed, and so there's always difficulty and delay in communicating with her." "Do you know what age she is?" I said. Here he

looked unfathomably profound, and returned, "Rather advanced in life." "You said she was a governess, didn't you?" said I; to which he replied in the most emphatic and positive manner, "A governess."

He then came and stood in the corner of the hearth, with his back to the fire, and delivered himself like an oracle concerning you. He told me that early in life (conveying to me the impression of about a quarter of a century ago) you had had your feelings desperately wounded by some cause, real or imaginary — "It does not matter which," said I, with the greatest sagacity — and that you had then taken to writing verses. That you were of an unhappy temperament, but keenly sensitive to encouragement. That you wrote after the educational duties of the day were discharged. That you sometimes thought of never writing any more. That you had been away for some time "with your pupils." That your letters were of a mild and melancholy character, and that you did not seem to care as much as might be expected about money. All this time I sat poking the fire, with a wisdom upon me absolutely crushing; and finally I begged him to assure the lady that she might trust me with her real address, and that it would be better to have it now, as I hoped our further communications, etc. etc. etc. You must have felt enormously wicked last Tuesday, when I, such a babe in the wood, was unconsciously prattling to you. But you have given me so much pleasure, and have made me shed so many tears, that I can only think of you now in association with the sentiment and grace of your verses.

So pray accept the blessing and forgiveness of

Richard Watts, though I am afraid you come under both his conditions of exclusion.*

Very faithfully yours.

1855.

NARRATIVE.

IN the beginning of this year, Charles Dickens gave public readings at Reading, Sherborne, and Bradford in Yorkshire, to which reference is made in the first following letters. Besides this, he was fully occupied in getting up a play for his children, which was acted on the 6th January. Mr. Planché's fairy extravaganza of "Fortunio and his Seven Gifted Servants" was the play selected, the parts being filled by all his own children and some of their young friends, and Charles Dickens, Mr. Mark Lemon, and Mr. Wilkie Collins playing with them, the only grown-up members of the company. In February he made a short trip to Paris with Mr. Wilkie Collins, with an intention of going on to Bordeaux, which was abandoned on account of bad weather. Out of the success of the children's play at Tavistock House rose a scheme for a serious play at the same place. Mr. Collins undertaking to write a melodrama for the purpose, and Mr. Stanfield to paint scenery and drop-scene, Charles Dickens turned one of the rooms of the house into a very perfect little theatre, and in June "The Lighthouse" was acted for three nights, with "Mr. Nightingale's Diary" and "Animal

* The inscription on the house in Rochester known as "Watts's Charity" is to the effect that it furnishes a night's lodging for six poor travellers—"not being ROGUES or PROCTORS."

Magnetism" as farces; the actors being himself and several members of the original amateur company, the actresses, his two daughters and his sister-in-law. Mr. Stanfield, after entering most heartily into the enterprise, and giving constant time and attention to the painting of his beautiful scenes, was unfortunately ill and unable to attend the first performance. We give a letter to him, reporting its great success.

In this summer Charles Dickens made a speech at a great meeting at Drury Lane Theatre on the subject of "Administrative Reform," of which he writes to Mr. Macready. On this subject of "Administrative Reform," too, we give two letters to the great Nineveh traveller Mr. Layard (now Sir Austen H. Layard), for whom, as his letters show, he conceived at once the affectionate friendship which went on increasing from this time for the rest of his life. Mr. Layard also spoke at the Drury Lane meeting.

Charles Dickens had made a promise to give another reading at Birmingham for the funds of the institute which still needed help; and in a letter to Mr. Arthur Ryland, asking him to fix a time for it, he gives the first idea of a selection from "David Copperfield," which was afterwards one of the most popular of his readings.

He was at all times fond of making excursions for a day—or two or three days—to Rochester and its neighbourhood; and after one of these, this year, he writes to Mr. Wills that he has seen a "small freehold" to be sold, *opposite* the house on which he had fixed his childish affections (and which he calls in *this* letter the "Hermitage," its real name being "Gad's Hill

Place"). The latter house was not, at that time, to be had, and he made some approach to negotiations as to the other "little freehold," which, however, did not come to anything. Later in the year, however, Mr. Wills, by an accident, discovered that Gad's Hill Place, the property of Miss Lynn, the well-known authoress, and a constant contributor to "Household Words," was itself for sale; and a negotiation for its purchase commenced, which was not, however, completed until the following spring.

Later in the year, the performance of "The Lighthouse" was repeated, for a charitable purpose, at the Campden House theatre.

This autumn was passed at Folkestone. Charles Dickens had decided upon spending the following winter in Paris, and the family proceeded there from Folkestone in October, making a halt at Boulogne; from whence his sister-in-law preceded the party to Paris, to secure lodgings, with the help of Lady Olliffe. He followed, to make his choice of apartments that had been found, and he writes to his wife and to Mr. Wills, giving a description of the Paris house. Here he began "Little Dorrit." In a letter to Mrs. Watson, from Folkestone, he gives her the name which he had first proposed for this story—"Nobody's Fault."

During his absence from England, Mr. and Mrs. Hogarth occupied Tavistock House, and his eldest son, being now engaged in business, remained with them, coming to Paris only for Christmas. Three of his boys were at school at Boulogne at this time, and one, Walter Landor, at Wimbledon, studying for an Indian army appointment.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *January 3rd*, 1855.M. de
Cerjat.

MY DEAR CERJAT,

When your Christmas letter did not arrive according to custom, I felt as if a bit of Christmas had fallen out and there was no supplying the piece. However, it was soon supplied by yourself, and the bowl became round and sound again.

The Christmas number of "Household Words," I suppose, will reach Lausanne about midsummer. The first ten pages or so—all under the head of "The First Poor Traveller"—are written by me, and I hope you will find, in the story of the soldier which they contain, something that may move you a little. It moved me *not* a little in the writing, and I believe has touched a vast number of people. We have sold eighty thousand of it.

I am but newly come home from reading at Reading (where I succeeded poor Talfourd as the president of an institution), and at Sherborne, in Dorsetshire, and at Bradford, in Yorkshire. Wonderful audiences! and the number at the last place three thousand seven hundred. And yet but for the noise of their laughing and cheering, they "went" like one man.

The absorption of the English mind in the war is, to me, a melancholy thing. Every other subject of popular solicitude and sympathy goes down before it. I fear I clearly see that for years to come domestic reforms are shaken to the root; every miserable red-tapist flourishes war over the head of every protester against his humbug; and everything connected with it is pushed to such an unreasonable extent, that, however kind and necessary it may be in itself, it becomes

ridiculous. For all this it is an indubitable fact, I conceive, that Russia MUST BE stopped, and that the future peace of the world renders the war imperative upon us. The Duke of Newcastle lately addressed a private letter to the newspapers, entreating them to exercise a larger discretion in respect of the letters of "Our Own Correspondents," against which Lord Raglan protests as giving the Emperor of Russia information for nothing which would cost him (if indeed he could get it at all) fifty or a hundred thousand pounds a year. The communication has not been attended with much effect, so far as I can see. In the meantime I do suppose we have the wretchedest Ministry that ever was—in whom nobody not in office of some sort believes—yet whom there is nobody to displace. The strangest result, perhaps, of years of Reformed Parliaments that ever the general sagacity did *not* foresee.

Let me recommend you, as a brother-reader of high distinction, two comedies, both Goldsmith's—"She Stoops to Conquer" and "The Good-natured Man." Both are so admirable and so delightfully written that they read wonderfully. A friend of mine, Forster, who wrote "The Life of Goldsmith," was very ill a year or so ago, and begged me to read to him one night as he lay in bed, "something of Goldsmith's." I fell upon "She Stoops to Conquer," and we enjoyed it with that wonderful intensity, that I believe he began to get better in the first scene, and was all right again in the fifth act.

I am charmed by your account of Haldimand, to whom my love. Tell him Sydney Smith's daughter has privately printed a life of her father with selections from his letters, which has great merit, and often pre-

sents him exactly as he used to be. I have strongly urged her to publish it, and I think she will do so, about March.

My eldest boy has come home from Germany to learn a business life at Birmingham (I think), first of all. The whole nine are well and happy. Ditto, Mrs. Dickens. Ditto, Georgina. My two girls are full of interest in yours; and one of mine (as I think I told you when I was at Elysée) is curiously like one of yours in the face. They are all agog now about a great fairy play, which is to come off here next Monday. The house is full of spangles, gas, Jew theatrical tailors, and pantomime carpenters. We all unite in kindest and best loves to dear Mrs. Cerjat and all the blooming daughters. And I am, with frequent thoughts of you and cordial affection, ever, my dear Cerjat,

Your faithful Friend.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *January 3rd*, 1855. Miss Mary Boyle.

MY DEAR MARY,

This is a word of heartfelt greeting, in exchange for yours, which came to me most pleasantly, and was received with a cordial welcome. If I had leisure to write a letter, I should write you, at this point, perhaps the very best letter that ever was read; but, being in the agonies of getting up a gorgeous fairy play for the postboys, on Charley's birthday (besides having the work of half-a-dozen to do as a regular thing), I leave the merits of the wonderful epistle to your lively fancy.

Enclosing a kiss, if you will have the kindness to return it when done with.

I have just been reading my "Christmas Carol" in Yorkshire. I should have lost my heart to the beautiful

young landlady of my hotel (age twenty-nine, dress, black frock and jacket, exquisitely braided) if it had not been safe in your possession.

Many, many happy years to you! My regards to that obstinate old Wurzell* and his dame, when you have them under lock and key again.

Ever affectionately yours.

Mrs.
Gaskell.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *January 27th*, 1855.

MY DEAR MRS. GASKELL,

Let me congratulate you on the conclusion of your story; not because it is the end of a task to which you had conceived a dislike (for I imagine you to have got the better of that delusion by this time), but because it is the vigorous and powerful accomplishment of an anxious labour. It seems to me that you have felt the ground thoroughly firm under your feet, and have strided on with a force and purpose that MUST now give you pleasure.

You will not, I hope, allow that not-lucid interval of dissatisfaction with yourself (and me?), which beset you for a minute or two once upon a time, to linger in the shape of any disagreeable association with "Household Words." I shall still look forward to the large sides of paper, and shall soon feel disappointed if they don't begin to reappear.

I thought it best that Wills should write the business letter on the conclusion of the story, as that part of our communications had always previously rested with him. I trust you found it satisfactory? I refer to it, not as a matter of mere form, but because I sincerely wish everything between us to be

* Captain Cavendish Boyle was governor of the military prison at Weedon.

beyond the possibility of misunderstanding or reservation.

Dear Mrs. Gaskell, very faithfully yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Monday, Jan. 29th, 1855.*

Mr.
Arthur
Ryland.

MY DEAR MR. RYLAND,

I have been in the greatest difficulty—which I am not yet out of—to know what to read at Birmingham. I fear the idea of next month is now impracticable. Which of two other months do you think would be preferable for your Birmingham objects? Next May, or next December?

Having already read two Christmas books at Birmingham, I should like to get out of that restriction, and have a swim in the broader waters of one of my long books. I have been poring over “Copperfield” (which is my favourite), with the idea of getting a reading out of it, to be called by some such name as “Young Housekeeping and Little Emily.” But there is still the huge difficulty that I constructed the whole with immense pains, and have so woven it up and blended it together, that I cannot yet so separate the parts as to tell the story of David’s married life with Dora, and the story of Mr. Peggotty’s search for his niece, within the time. This is my object. If I could possibly bring it to bear, it would make a very attractive reading, with a strong interest in it, and a certain completeness.

This is exactly the state of the case. I don’t mind confiding to you, that I never can approach the book with perfect composure (it had such perfect possession of me when I wrote it), and that I no sooner begin to try to get it into this form, than I begin to read it all,

and to feel that I cannot disturb it. I have not been unmindful of the agreement we made at parting, and I have sat staring at the backs of my books for an inspiration. This project is the only one that I have constantly reverted to, and yet I have made no progress in it!

Faithfully yours always.

Monsieur
Regnier.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, LONDON, *Saturday Evening, Feb. 3rd, 1855.*

MY DEAR REGNIER,

I am coming to Paris for a week, with my friend Collins—son of the English painter who painted our green lanes and our cottage children so beautifully. Do not tell this to Le Vieux. Unless I have the ill fortune to stumble against him in the street I shall not make my arrival known to him.

I purpose leaving here on Sunday, the 11th, but I shall stay that night at Boulogne to see two of my little boys who are at school there. We shall come to Paris on Monday, the 12th, arriving there in the evening.

Now, *mon cher*, do you think you can, without inconvenience, engage me for a week an apartment—cheerful, light, and wholesome—containing a comfortable *salon et deux chambres à coucher*. I do not care whether it is an hotel or not, but the reason why I do not write for an apartment to the Hôtel Brighton is, that there they expect one to dine at home (I mean in the apartment) generally; whereas, as we are coming to Paris expressly to be always looking about us, we want to dine wherever we like every day. Consequently, what we want to find is a good apartment

where we can have our breakfast but where we shall never dine.

Can you engage such accommodation for me? If you can, I shall feel very much obliged to you. If the apartment should happen to contain a little bed for a servant I might perhaps bring one, but I do not care about that at all. I want it to be pleasant and gay, and to throw myself *en garçon* on the festive *diableries de Paris*.

Mrs. Dickens and her sister send their kindest regards to Madame Regnier and you, in which I heartily join. All the children send their loves to the two brave boys and the Normandy *bonnes*.

I shall hope for a short answer from you one day next week. My dear Regnier,

Always faithfully yours.

OFFICE OF "HOUSEHOLD WORDS," *Friday, Feb. 9th, 1855.* Mr. W. H. Wills.

MY DEAR WILLS,

I want to alter the arrangements for to-morrow, and put you to some inconvenience.

When I was at Gravesend t'other day, I saw, at Gad's Hill—just opposite to the Hermitage, where Miss Lynn used to live—a little freehold to be sold. The spot and the very house are literally "a dream of my childhood," and I should like to look at it before I go to Paris. With that purpose I must go to Strood by the North Kent, at a quarter-past ten to-morrow morning, and I want you, strongly booted, to go with me! (I know the particulars from the agent.)

Can you? Let me know. If you can, can you manage so that we can take the proofs with us? If

you can't, will you bring them to Tavistock House at dinner time to-morrow, half-past five? Forster will dine with us, but no one else.

I am uncertain of your being in town to-night, but I send John up with this.

Ever faithfully.

Miss
Hogarth.

HÔTEL MEURICE, PARIS, *Friday, Feb. 16th, 1855.*

MY DEAR GEORGY,

I heard from home last night; but the posts are so delayed and put out by the snow, that they come in at all sorts of times except the right times, and utterly defy all calculation. Will you tell Catherine with my love, that I will write to her again to-morrow afternoon; I hope she may then receive my letter by Monday morning, and in it I purpose telling her when I may be expected home. The weather is so severe and the roads are so bad, that the journey to and from Bordeaux seems out of the question. We have made up our minds to abandon it for the present, and to return about Tuesday night or Wednesday. Collins continues in a queer state, but is perfectly cheerful under the stoppage of his wine and other afflictions.

We have a beautiful apartment, very elegantly furnished, very thickly carpeted, and as warm as any apartment in Paris *can* be in such weather. We are very well waited on and looked after. We breakfast at ten, read and write till two, and then I go out walking all over Paris, while the invalid sits by the fire or is deposited in a café. We dine at five, in a different restaurant every day, and at seven or so go to the theatre—sometimes to two theatres, sometimes to three. We get home about twelve, light the fire, and drink

lemonade, to which *I* add rum. We go to bed between one and two. I live in peace, like an elderly gentleman, and regard myself as in a negative state of virtue and respectability.

The theatres are not particularly good, but I have seen Lemaître act in the most wonderful and astounding manner. I am afraid we must go to the Opéra Comique on Sunday. To-morrow we dine with Regnier and to-day with the Olliffes.

"La Joie fait Peur," at the Français, delighted me. Exquisitely played and beautifully imagined altogether. Last night we went to the Porte St. Martin to see a piece (English subject) called "Jane Osborne," which the characters pronounce "Ja Nosbornnne." The seducer was Lord Nottingham. The comic Englishwoman's name (she kept lodgings and was a very bad character) was Missees Christmas. She had begun to get into great difficulties with a gentleman of the name of Mee-stair Cornhill, when we were obliged to leave, at the end of the first act, by the intolerable stench of the place. The whole theatre must be standing over some vast cesspool. It was so alarming that I instantly rushed into a café and had brandy.

My ear has gradually become so accustomed to French, that I understand the people at the theatres (for the first time) with perfect ease and satisfaction. I walked about with Regnier for an hour and a half yesterday, and received many compliments on my angelic manner of speaking the celestial language. There is a winter Franconi's now, high up on the Boulevards, just like the round theatre on the Champs Elysées, and as bright and beautiful. A clown from Astley's is all in high favour there at present. He talks slang Eng-

lish (being evidently an idiot), as if he felt a perfect confidence that everybody understands him. His name is Boswell, and the whole cirque rang last night with cries for Boz Zwilllll! Boz Zweellll! Boz Zwuallll! etc. etc. etc. etc.

I must begin to look out for the box of bon-bons for the noble and fascinating Plornish-Maroon. Give him my love and a thousand kisses.

Loves to Mamey, Katey, Sydney, Harry, and the following stab to Anne—she forgot to pack me any shaving soap.

Ever, my dear Georgy, most affectionately yours.

P.S.—Collins sends kind regards.

Mr. W. H.
Wills.

HÔTEL MEURICE, PARIS, *Friday, Feb. 16th, 1855.*

MY DEAR WILLS,

I received your letter yesterday evening. I have not yet seen the lists of trains and boats, but propose arranging to return about Tuesday or Wednesday. In the meantime I am living like Gil Blas and doing nothing. I am very much obliged to you, indeed, for the trouble you have kindly taken about the little freehold. It is clear to me that its merits resolve themselves into the view and the spot. If I had more money these considerations might, with me, overtop all others. But, as it is, I consider the matter quite disposed of, finally settled in the negative, and to be thought no more about. I shall not go down and look at it, as I could add nothing to your report.

Paris is finer than ever, and I go wandering about it all day. We dine at all manner of places, and go to two or three theatres in the evening. I suppose, as

an old farmer said of Scott, I am "makin' mysel'" all the time; but I seem to be rather a free-and-easy sort of superior vagabond.

I live in continual terror of——, and am strongly fortified within doors, with a means of retreat into my bedroom always ready. Up to the present blessed moment, his staggering form has not appeared.

As to yesterday's post from England, I have not, at the present moment, the slightest idea where it may be. It is under the snow somewhere, I suppose; but nobody expects it, and *Galignani* reprints every morning leaders from *The Times* of about a fortnight or three weeks old.

Collins, who is not very well, sends his "penitent regards," and says he is enjoying himself as much as a man with the weight of a broken promise on his conscience can.

Ever, my dear Wills, faithfully yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *February 26th*, 1855.

Mr.
Arthur
Ryland.

MY DEAR MR. RYLAND,

Charley came home, I assure you, perfectly delighted with his visit to you, and rapturous in his accounts of your great kindness to him.

It appears to me that the first question in reference to my reading (I have not advanced an inch in my "Copperfield" trials by-the-bye) is, whether you think you could devise any plan in connection with the room at Dee's, which would certainly bring my help in money up to five hundred pounds. That is what I want. If it could be done by a subscription for two nights, for instance, I would not be chary of my time and trouble. But if you cannot see your way clearly

to that result in that connection, then I think it would be better to wait until we can have the Town Hall at Christmas. I have promised to read, about Christmas time, at Sheffield and at Peterboro'. I *could* add Birmingham to the list, then, if need were. But what I want is, to give the institution in all five hundred pounds. That is my object, and nothing less will satisfy me.

Will you think it over, taking counsel with whomsoever you please, and let me know what conclusion you arrive at. Only think of me as subservient to the institution.

My dear Mr. Ryland, always very faithfully yours.

Mr. David
Roberts,
R.A.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *February 28th, 1855.*

MY DEAR DAVID ROBERTS,

I hope to make it quite plain to you, in a few words, why I think it right to stay away from the Lord Mayor's dinner to the club. If I did not feel a kind of rectitude involved in my non-acceptance of his invitation, your note would immediately induce me to change my mind.

Entertaining a strong opinion on the subject of the City Corporation as it stands, and the absurdity of its pretensions in an age perfectly different, in all conceivable respects, from that to which it properly belonged as a reality, I have expressed that opinion on more than one occasion, within a year or so, in "Household Words." I do not think it consistent with my respect for myself, or for the art I profess, to blow hot and cold in the same breath; and to laugh at the institution in print, and accept the hospitality of its representative while the ink is staring us all in the

face. There is a great deal too much of this among us, and it does not elevate the earnestness or delicacy of literature.

This is my sole consideration. Personally I have always met the present Lord Mayor on the most agreeable terms, and I think him an excellent one. As between you, and me, and him, I cannot have the slightest objection to your telling him the truth. On a more private occasion, when he was not keeping his state, I should be delighted to interchange any courtesy with that honourable and amiable gentleman, Mr. Moon.

Believe me always cordially yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Tuesday Evening, April 3rd, 1855.*

Mr.
Austen H.
Layard.

DEAR LAYARD,

Since I had the pleasure of seeing you again at Miss Coutts's (really a greater pleasure to me than I could easily tell you), I have thought a good deal of the duty we all owe you of helping you as much as we can. Being on very intimate terms with Lemon, the editor of "Punch" (a most affectionate and true-hearted fellow), I mentioned to him in confidence what I had at heart. You will find yourself the subject of their next large cut, and of some lines in an earnest spirit. He again suggested the point to Mr. Shirley Brookes, one of their regular corps, who will do what is right in *The Illustrated London News* and *The Weekly Chronicle*, papers, that go into the hands of large numbers of people. I have also communicated with Jerrold, whom I trust, and have begged him not to be diverted from the straight path of help to the most useful man in

England on all possible occasions. Forster I will speak to carefully, and I have no doubt it will quicken him a little; not that we have anything to complain of in his direction. If you ever see any new loophole, cranny, needle's-eye, through which I can present your case to "Household Words," I most earnestly entreat you, as your staunch friend and admirer—you *can* have no truer—to indicate it to me at any time or season, and to count upon my being Damascus steel to the core.

All this is nothing; because all these men, and thousands of others, dote upon you. But I know it would be a comfort to me, in your hard-fighting place, to be assured of such sympathy, and therefore only I write.

You have other recreations for your Sundays in the session, I daresay, than to come here. But it is generally a day on which I do not go out, and when we dine at half-past five in the easiest way in the world, and smoke in the peacefulest manner. Perhaps one of these Sundays after Easter you might not be indisposed to begin to dig us out?

And I should like, on a Saturday of your appointing, to get a few of the serviceable men I know—such as I have mentioned—about you here. Will you think of this, too, and suggest a Saturday for our dining together?

I am really ashamed and moved that you should do your part so manfully and be left alone in the conflict. I felt you to be all you are the first moment I saw you. I know you will accept my regard and fidelity for what they are worth.

Dear Layard, very heartily yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Tuesday, April 10th, 1855.*Mr.
Austen H.
Layard.

DEAR LAYARD,

I shall of course observe the strictest silence, at present, in reference to your resolutions. It will be a most acceptable occupation to me to go over them with you, and I have not a doubt of their producing a strong effect out of doors.

There is nothing in the present time at once so galling and so alarming to me as the alienation of the people from their own public affairs. I have no difficulty in understanding it. They have had so little to do with the game through all these years of Parliamentary Reform, that they have sullenly laid down their cards, and taken to looking on. The players who are left at the table do not see beyond it, conceive that gain and loss and all the interest of the play are in their hands, and will never be wiser until they and the table and the lights and the money are all overturned together. And I believe the discontent to be so much the worse for smouldering, instead of blazing openly, that it is extremely like the general mind of France before the breaking out of the first Revolution, and is in danger of being turned by any one of a thousand accidents—a bad harvest—the last strain too much of aristocratic insolence or incapacity—a defeat abroad—a mere chance at home—with such a devil of a conflagration as never has been beheld since.

Meanwhile, all our English tuft-hunting, toad-eating, and other manifestations of accursed gentility—to say nothing of the Lord knows who's defiances of the proven truth before six hundred and fifty men—ARE expressing themselves every day. So, every day, the

disgusted millions with this unnatural gloom are confirmed and hardened in the very worst of moods. Finally, round all this is an atmosphere of poverty, hunger, and ignorant desperation, of the mere existence of which perhaps not one man in a thousand of those not actually enveloped in it, through the whole extent of this country, has the least idea.

It seems to me an absolute impossibility to direct the spirit of the people at this pass until it shows itself. If they begin to bestir themselves in the vigorous national manner; if they would appear in political reunion, array themselves peacefully but in vast numbers against a system that they know to be rotten altogether, make themselves heard like the sea all round this island, I for one should be in such a movement heart and soul, and should think it a duty of the plainest kind to go along with it, and try to guide it by all possible means. But you can no more help a people who do not help themselves than you can help a man who does not help himself. And until the people can be got up from the lethargy, which is an awful symptom of the advanced state of their disease, I know of nothing that can be done beyond keeping their wrongs continually before them.

I shall hope to see you soon after you come back. Your speeches at Aberdeen are most admirable, manful, and earnest. I would have such speeches at every market-cross, and in every town-hall, and among all sorts and conditions of men; up in the very balloons, and down in the very diving-bells.

Ever, cordially yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Saturday, April 14th, 1855.*Mr. John
Forster.

MY DEAR FORSTER,

I cannot express to you how very much delighted I am with the "Steele." I think it incomparably the best of the series. The pleasanter humanity of the subject may commend it more to one's liking, but that again requires a delicate handling, which you have given to it in a most charming manner. It is surely not possible to approach a man with a finer sympathy, and the assertion of the claims of literature throughout is of the noblest and most gallant kind.

I don't agree with you about the serious papers in *The Spectator*, which I think (whether they be Steele's or Addison's) are generally as indifferent as the humour of *The Spectator* is delightful. And I have always had a notion that Prue understood her husband very well, and held him in consequence, when a fonder woman with less show of caprice must have let him go. But these are points of opinion. The paper is masterly, and all I have got to say is, that if —— had a grain of the honest sentiment with which it overflows, he never would or could have made so great a mistake.

Ever affectionately.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Thursday, April 26th, 1855.*Mr. Mark
Lemon.

ON THE DEATH OF AN INFANT.

MY DEAR MARK,

I will call for you at two, and go with you to Highgate, by all means.

Leech and I called on Tuesday evening and left our loves. I have not written to you since, because I

thought it best to leave you quiet for a day. I have no need to tell you, my dear fellow, that my thoughts have been constantly with you, and that I have not forgotten (and never shall forget) who sat up with me one night when a little place in my house was left empty.

It is hard to lose any child, but there are many blessed sources of consolation in the loss of a baby. There is a beautiful thought in Fielding's "Journey from this World to the next," where the baby he had lost many years before was found by him all radiant and happy, building him a bower in the Elysian Fields where they were to live together when he came.

Ever affectionately yours.

P.S.—Our kindest loves to Mrs. Lemon.

Mr.
Clarkson
Stanfield,
R.A.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Sunday, May 20th, 1855.*

MY DEAR STANNY,

I have a little lark in contemplation, if you will help it to fly.

Collins has done a melodrama (a regular old-style melodrama), in which there is a very good notion. I am going to act it, as an experiment, in the children's theatre here—I, Mark Collins, Egg, and my daughter Mary, the whole *dram. pers.*; our families and yours the whole audience; for I want to make the stage large and shouldn't have room for above five-and-twenty spectators. Now there is only one scene in the piece, and that, my tarry lad, is the inside of a lighthouse. Will you come and paint it for us one night, and we'll all turn to and help? It is a mere wall, of course, but Mark and I have sworn that you must do it. If you will say yes, I should like to have the tiny flats made,

after you have looked at the place, and not before. On Wednesday in this week I am good for a steak and the play, if you will make your own appointment here; or any day next week except Thursday. Write me a line in reply. We mean to burst on an astonished world with the melodrama, without any note of preparation. So don't say a syllable to Forster if you should happen to see him.

Ever affectionately yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Tuesday Afternoon, Six o'clock,*
May 22nd, 1855.

Mr.
 Clarkson
 Stanfield,
 R.A.

MY DEAR STANNY,

Your note came while I was out walking. Even if I had been at home I could not have managed to dine together to-day, being under a beastly engagement to dine out. Unless I hear from you to the contrary, I shall expect you here some time to-morrow, and will remain at home. I only wait your instructions to get the little canvases made. O, what a pity it is not the outside of the light'us, with the sea a-rowling agin it! Never mind, we'll get an effect out of the inside, and there's a storm and a shipwreck "off;" and the great ambition of my life will be achieved at last, in the wearing of a pair of very coarse petticoat trousers. So hoorar for the salt sea, mate, and bouse up!

Ever affectionately,

DICKY.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *May 23rd, 1855.*

Mr. Mark
 Lemon.

MY DEAR MARK,

Stanny says he is only sorry it is not the outside of the lighthouse with a raging sea and a transparent

light. He enters into the project with the greatest delight, and I think we shall make a capital thing of it.

It now occurs to me that we may as well do a farce too. I should like to get in a little part for Katey, and also for Charley, if it were practicable. What do you think of "Animal Mag."? You and I in our old parts; Collins, Jeffrey; Charley, the Markis; Katey and Mary (or Georgina), the two ladies? Can you think of anything merry that is better? It ought to be broad, as a relief to the melodrama, unless we could find something funny with a story in it too. I rather incline myself to "Animal Mag." Will you come round and deliver your sentiments?

Ever affectionately.

Mr. Frank
Stone,
A.R.A.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Thursday, May 24th, 1855.*

MY DEAR STONE,

Great projects are afoot here for a grown-up play in about three weeks' time. Former schoolroom arrangements to be reversed—large stage and small audience. Stanfield bent on desperate effects, and all day long with his coat off, up to his eyes in distemper colours.

Will you appear in your celebrated character of Mr. Nightingale? I want to wind up with that popular farce, we all playing our old parts.

Ever affectionately.

The same.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *May 24th, 1855.*

MY DEAR STONE,

That's right! You will find the words come back very quickly. Why, *of course* your people are to come, and if Stanfield don't astonish 'em, I'm a Dutchman.

O Heaven, if you could hear the ideas he proposes to me, making even *my* hair stand on end!

Will you get Marcus or some similar bright creature to copy out old Nightingale's part for you, and then return the book? This is the prompt-book, the only one I have; and Katey and Georgina (being also in wild excitement) want to write their parts out with all despatch.

Ever affectionately.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Thursday, May 24th, 1855.*

Mr. W.
Wilkie
Collins.

MY DEAR COLLINS,

I shall expect you to-morrow evening at "Household Words." I have written a little ballad for Mary—"The Story of the Ship's Carpenter and the Little Boy, in the Shipwreck."

Let us close up with "Mr. Nightingale's Diary." Will you look whether you have a book of it, or your part.

All other matters and things hereunto belonging when we meet.

Ever faithfully.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Tuesday Morning, June 19th, 1855.*

Mrs.
Trollope.

MY DEAR MRS. TROLLOPE,

I was out of town on Sunday, or I should have answered your note immediately on its arrival. I cannot have the pleasure of seeing the famous "medium" to-night, for I have some theatricals at home. But I fear I shall not in any case be a good subject for the purpose, as I altogether want faith in the thing.

I have not the least belief in the awful unseen world being available for evening parties at so much per night; and, although I should be ready to receive

enlightenment from any source, I must say I have very little hope of it from the spirits who express themselves through mediums, as I have never yet observed them to talk anything but nonsense, of which (as Carlyle would say) there is probably enough in these days of ours, and in all days, among mere mortality.

Very faithfully yours.

Mr.
Clarkson
Stanfield,
R.A.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Wednesday, June 20th, 1855.*

MY DEAR STANNY,

I write a hasty note to let you know that last night was perfectly wonderful!!!

Such an audience! Such a brilliant success from first to last! The Queen had taken it into her head in the morning to go to Chatham, and had carried Phipps with her. He wrote to me asking if it were possible to give him a quarter of an hour. I got through that time before the overture, and he came without any dinner, so influenced by eager curiosity. Lemon and I did every conceivable absurdity, I think, in the farce; and they never left off laughing. At supper I proposed your health, which was drunk with nine times nine, and three cheers over. We then turned to at Scotch reels (having had no exercise), and danced in the maddest way until five this morning.

It is as much as I can do to guide the pen.

With loves to Mrs. Stanfield and all,

Ever most affectionately yours.

Mr. W. C.
Macready.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Saturday, June 30th, 1855.*

MY VERY DEAR MACREADY,

I write shortly, after a day's work at my desk, rather than lose a post in answering your enthusiastic,

earnest, and young—how young, in all the best side of youth—letter.

To tell you the truth, I confidently expected to hear from you. I knew that if there were a man in the world who would be interested in, and who would approve of, my giving utterance to whatever was in me at this time, it would be you. I was as sure of you as of the sun this morning.

The subject is surrounded by difficulties; the Association is sorely in want of able men; and the resistance of all the phalanx, who have an interest in corruption and mismanagement, is the resistance of a struggle against death. But the great, first, strong necessity is to rouse the people up, to keep them stirring and vigilant, to carry the war dead into the tent of such creatures as——, and ring into their souls (or what stands for them) that the time for dandy insolence is gone for ever. It may be necessary to come to that law of primogeniture (I have no love for it), or to come to even greater things; but this is the first service to be done, and unless it is done, there is not a chance. For this, and to encourage timid people to come in, I went to Drury Lane the other night; and I wish you had been there and had seen and heard the people.

The Association will be proud to have your name and gift. When we sat down on the stage the other night, and were waiting a minute or two to begin, I said to Morley, the chairman (a thoroughly fine earnest fellow), "this reminds me so of one of my dearest friends, with a melancholy so curious, that I don't know whether the place feels familiar to me or strange." He was full of interest directly, and we went on talking

of you until the moment of his getting up to open the business.

They are going to print my speech in a tract-form, and send it all over the country. I corrected it for the purpose last night. We are all well. Charley in the City; all the boys at home for the holidays; three prizes brought home triumphantly (one from the Boulogne waters and one from Wimbledon); I taking dives into a new book, and runs at leap-frog over "Household Words;" and Anne going to be married—which is the only bad news.

Catherine, Georgie, Mary, Katey, Charley, and all the rest, send multitudes of loves. Ever, my dearest Macready, with unalterable affection and attachment,
Your faithful Friend.

Mr. W.
Wilkie
Collins.

3, ALBION VILLAS, FOLKESTONE, *Tuesday, July 17th, 1855.*

MY DEAR COLLINS,

Walter goes back to school on the 1st of August. Will you come out of school to this breezy vacation on the same day, or rather *this day fortnight, July 31st?* for that is the day on which he leaves us, and we begin (here's a parent!) to be able to be comfortable. Why a boy of that age should seem to have on at all times a hundred and fifty pair of double-soled boots, and to be always jumping a bottom stair with the whole hundred and fifty, I don't know. But the woeful fact is within my daily experience.

We have a very pleasant little house, overlooking the sea, and I think you will like the place. It rained, in honour of our arrival, with the greatest vigour, yesterday. I went out after dinner to buy some nails (you know the arrangements that would be then in

progress), and I stopped in the rain, about halfway down a steep, crooked street, like a crippled ladder, to look at a little coachmaker's, where there had just been a sale. Speculating on the insolvent coachmaker's business, and what kind of coaches he could possibly have expected to get orders for in Folkestone, I thought, "What would bring together fifty people now, in this little street, at this little rainy minute?" On the instant, a brewer's van, with two mad horses in it, and the harness dangling about them—like the trappings of those horses you are acquainted with, who bolted through the starry courts of heaven—dashed by me, and in that instant, such a crowd as would have accumulated in Fleet Street sprang up magically. Men fell out of windows, dived out of doors, plunged down courts, precipitated themselves down steps, came down waterspouts, instead of rain, I think, and I never saw so wonderful an instance of the gregarious effect of an excitement.

A man, a woman, and a child had been thrown out on the horses taking fright and the reins breaking. The child is dead, and the woman very ill but will probably recover, and the man has a hand broken and other mischief done to him.

Let me know what Wigan says. If he does not take the play, and readily too, I would recommend you not to offer it elsewhere. You have gained great reputation by it, have done your position a deal of good, and (as I think) stand so well with it, that it is a pity to engender the notion that you care to stand better.

Ever faithfully.

Mr. W. H.
Wills.

FOLKESTONE, *September 16th*, 1855.

MY DEAR WILLS,

Scrooge is delighted to find that Bob Cratchit is enjoying his holiday in such a delightful situation; and he says (with that warmth of nature which has distinguished him since his conversion), "Make the most of it, Bob; make the most of it."

[I am just getting to work on No. 3 of the new book, and am in the hideous state of mind belonging to that condition.]

I have not a word of news. I am steeped in my story, and rise and fall by turns into enthusiasm and depression.

Ever faithfully.

The Hon.
Mrs.
Watson.

FOLKESTONE, *Sunday, Sept. 16th*, 1855.

MY DEAR MRS. WATSON,

This will be a short letter, but I hope not unwelcome. If you knew how often I write to you—in intention—I don't know where you would find room for the correspondence.

Catherine tells me that you want to know the name of my new book. I cannot bear that you should know it from anyone but me. It will not be made public until the end of October; the title is:

"NOBODY'S FAULT."

Keep it as the apple of your eye—an expressive form of speech, though I have not the least idea of what it means.

Next, I wish to tell you that I have appointed to read at Peterboro', on Tuesday, the 18th of December.

I have told the Dean that I cannot accept his hospitality, and that I am going with Mr. Wills to the inn, therefore I shall be absolutely at your disposal, and shall be more than disappointed if you don't stay with us. As the time approaches will you let me know your arrangements, and whether Mr. Wills can bespeak any rooms for you in arranging for me? Georgy will give you our address in Paris as soon as we shall have settled there. We shall leave here, I think, in rather less than a month from this time.

You know my state of mind as well as I do, indeed, if you don't know it much better, it is not the state of mind I take it to be. How I work, how I walk, how I shut myself up, how I roll down hills and climb up cliffs; how the new story is everywhere—heaving in the sea, flying with the clouds, blowing in the wind; how I settle to nothing, and wonder (in the old way) at my own incomprehensibility. I am getting on pretty well, have done the first two numbers, and am just now beginning the third; which egotistical announcements I make to you because I know you will be interested in them.

All the house send their kindest loves. I think of inserting an advertisement in *The Times*, offering to submit the Plornishghenter to public competition, and to receive fifty thousand pounds if such another boy cannot be found, and to pay five pounds (my fortune) if he can.

Ever, my dear Mrs. Watson, affectionately yours.

FOLKESTONE, *Sunday, Sept. 30th, 1855.*

Mr. W.
Wilkie
Collins.

MY DEAR COLLINS,

Welcome from the bosom of the deep! If a horn-pipe will be acceptable to you at any time (as a re-

minder of what the three brothers were always doing), I shall be, as the chairman says at Mr. Evans's, "happy to oblige."

I have almost finished No. 3, in which I have relieved my indignant soul with a scarifier. Sticking at it day after day, I am the *incompletest* letter-writer imaginable—seem to have no idea of holding a pen for any other purpose but that book. My fair Laura has not yet reported concerning Paris, but I should think will have done so before I see you. And now to that point. I purpose being in town on *Monday, the 8th*, when I have promised to dine with Forster. At the office, between half-past eleven and one that day, I will expect you, unless I hear from you to the contrary. Of course the H. W. stories are at your disposition. If you should have completed your idea, we might breakfast together at the G. on the Tuesday morning and discuss it. Or I shall be in town after ten on the Monday night. At the office I will tell you the idea of the Christmas number, which will put you in train, I hope, for a story. I have postponed the shipwreck idea for a year, as it seemed to require more force from me than I could well give it with the weight of a new start upon me.

All here send their kindest remembrances. We missed you very much, and the Plorn was quite inconsolable. We slide down Cæsar occasionally.

They launched the boat, the rapid building of which you remember, the other day. All the fishermen in the place, all the nondescripts, and all the boys pulled at it with ropes from six A.M. to four P.M. Every now and then the ropes broke, and they all fell down in the shingle. The obstinate way in which the beastly

thing wouldn't move was so exasperating that I wondered they didn't shoot it, or burn it. Whenever it moved an inch they all cheered; whenever it wouldn't move they all swore. Finally, when it was quite given over, some one tumbled against it accidentally (as it appeared to me, looking out at my window here), and it instantly shot about a mile into the sea, and they all stood looking at it helplessly.

Kind regards to Pigott, in which all unite.

Ever faithfully.

FOLKESTONE, *Thursday, Oct. 4th, 1855.* Mr. W. C. Macready.

MY DEAREST MACREADY,

I have been hammering away in that strenuous manner at my book, that I have had leisure for scarcely any letters but such as I have been obliged to write; having a horrible temptation when I lay down my book-pen to run out on the breezy downs here, tear up the hills, slide down the same, and conduct myself in a frenzied manner, for the relief that only exercise gives me.

Your letter to Miss Coutts in behalf of little Miss Warner I despatched straightway. She is at present among the Pyrenees, and a letter from her crossed that one of mine in which I enclosed yours, last week.

Pray stick to that dim notion you have of coming to Paris! How delightful it would be to see your aged countenance and perfectly bald head in that capital! It will renew your youth to visit a theatre (previously dining at the *Trois Frères*) in company with the jocund boy who now addresses you. Do, do stick to it.

You will be pleased to hear, I know, that Charley has gone into Baring's house under very auspicious

circumstances. Mr. Bates, of that firm, had done me the kindness to place him at the brokers' where he was. And when said Bates wrote to me a fortnight ago to say that an excellent opening had presented itself at Baring's, he added that the brokers gave Charley "so high a character for ability and zeal" that it would be unfair to receive him as a volunteer, and he must begin at a fifty-pound salary, to which I graciously consented.

As to the suffrage, I have lost hope even in the ballot. We appear to me to have proved the failure of representative institutions without an educated and advanced people to support them. What with teaching people to "keep in their stations," what with bringing up the soul and body of the land to be a good child, or to go to the beershop, to go a-poaching and go to the devil; what with having no such thing as a middle class (for though we are perpetually bragging of it as our safety, it is nothing but a poor fringe on the mantle of the upper); what with flunkyism, toadyism, letting the most contemptible lords come in for all manner of places, reading *The Court Circular* for the New Testament, I do reluctantly believe that the English people are habitually consenting parties to the miserable imbecility into which we have fallen, *and never will help themselves out of it*. Who is to do it, if anybody is, God knows. But at present we are on the down-hill road to being conquered, and the people WILL be content to bear it, sing "Rule Britannia," and WILL NOT be saved.

In No. 3 of my new book I have been blowing off a little of indignant steam which would otherwise blow me up, and with God's leave I shall walk in the same

all the days of my life; but I have no present political faith or hope—not a grain.

I am going to read the “Carol” here to-morrow in a long carpenter’s shop, which looks far more alarming as a place to hear in than the Town Hall at Birmingham.

Kindest loves from all to your dear sister, Kate and the darlings. It is blowing a gale here from the south-west and raining like mad.

Ever most affectionately.

2, RUE ST. FLORENTIN, *Tuesday, Oct. 16th, 1855.*

Mrs.
Charles
Dickens.

MY DEAREST CATHERINE,

We have had the most awful job to find a place that would in the least suit us, for Paris is perfectly full, and there is nothing to be got at any sane price. However, we have found two apartments—an *entresol* and a first floor, with a kitchen and servants’ room at the top of the house, at No. 49, Avenue des Champs Elysées.

You must be prepared for a regular Continental abode. There is only one window in each room, but the front apartments all look upon the main street of the Champs Elysées, and the view is delightfully cheerful. There are also plenty of rooms. They are not over and above well furnished, but by changing furniture from rooms we don’t care for to rooms we *do* care for, we shall be able to make them home-like and presentable. I think the situation itself almost the finest in Paris; and the children will have a window from which to look on the busy life outside.

We could have got a beautiful apartment in the Rue Faubourg St. Honoré for a very little more, most

elegantly furnished; but the greater part of it was on a courtyard, and it would never have done for the children. This, that I have taken for six months, is seven hundred francs per month, and twenty more for the *concierge*. What you have to expect is a regular French residence, which a little habitation will make pretty and comfortable, with nothing showy in it, but with plenty of rooms, and with that wonderful street in which the Barrière de l'Étoile stands outside. The amount of rooms is the great thing, and I believe it to be the place best suited for us, at a not unreasonable price in Paris.

Georgina and Lady Olliffe* send their loves. Georgina and I add ours to Mamey, Katey, the Plorn, and Harry. Ever affectionately.

Mr. W. H.
Wills.

49, AVENUE DES CHAMPS ÉLYSÉES, PARIS,

Friday, Oct. 19th, 1855.

MY DEAR WILLS,

After going through unheard-of bedevilments (of which you shall have further particulars as soon as I come right side upwards, which may happen in a day or two), we are at last established here in a series of closets, but a great many of them, with all Paris perpetually passing under the windows. Letters may have been wandering after me to that home in the Rue de Balzac, which is to be the subject of more lawsuits between the man who let it to me and the man who wouldn't let me have possession, than any other house that ever was built. But I have had no letters at all, and have been—ha, ha!—a maniac since last Monday.

* Wife of the late Sir Joseph Olliffe, Physician to the British Embassy.

I will try my hand at that paper for H. W. to-morrow, if I can get a yard of flooring to sit upon; but we have really been in that state of topsy-turvyhood that even that has been an unattainable luxury, and may yet be for eight-and-forty hours or so, for anything I see to the contrary.

Ever faithfully.

49, AVENUE DES CHAMPS ÉLYSÉES, PARIS,

Sunday Night, Oct. 21st, 1855.

Mr. W. H.
Wills.

MY DEAR WILLS,

Coming here from a walk this afternoon, I found your letter of yesterday awaiting me. I send this reply by my brother Alfred, who is here, and who returns home to-morrow. You should get it at the office early on Tuesday.

I will go to work to-morrow, and will send you, please God, an article by Tuesday's post, which you will get on Wednesday forenoon. Look carefully to the proof, as I shall not have time to receive it for correction. When you arrange about sending your parcels, will you ascertain, and communicate to me, the prices of telegraph messages? It will save me trouble, having no foreign servant (though French is in that respect a trump), and may be useful on an emergency.

I have two floors here—*entresol* and first—in a doll's house, but really pretty within, and the view without astounding, as you will say when you come. The house is on the Exposition side, about half a quarter of a mile above Franconi's, of course on the other side of the way, and close to the Jardin d'Hiver. Each room has but one window in it, but we have no

fewer than six rooms (besides the back ones) looking on the Champs Elysées, with the wonderful life perpetually flowing up and down. We have no spare-room, but excellent stowage for the whole family, including a capital dressing-room for me, and a really slap-up kitchen near the stairs. Damage for the whole, seven hundred francs a month.

But, sir—but—when Georgina, the servants, and I were here for the first night (Catherine and the rest being at Boulogne), I heard Georgy restless—turned out—asked: “What’s the matter?” “Oh, it’s dreadfully dirty. I can’t sleep for the smell of my room.” Imagine all my stage-managerial energies multiplied at daybreak by a thousand. Imagine the porter, the porter’s wife, the porter’s wife’s sister, a feeble upholsterer of enormous age from round the corner, and all his workmen (four boys), summoned. Imagine the partners in the proprietorship of the apartment, and martial little man with François-Prussian beard, also summoned. Imagine your inimitable chief briefly explaining that dirt is not in his way, and that he is driven to madness, and that he devotes himself to no coat and a dirty face, until the apartment is thoroughly purified. Imagine co-proprietors at first astounded, then urging that “it’s not the custom,” then wavering, then affected, then confiding their utmost private sorrows to the Inimitable, offering new carpets (accepted), embraces (not accepted), and really responding like French bricks. Sallow, unbrushed, unshorn, awful, stalks the Inimitable through the apartment until last night. Then all the improvements were concluded, and I do really believe the place to be now worth eight or nine hundred francs per month. You must

picture it as the smallest place you ever saw, but as exquisitely cheerful and vivacious, clean as anything human can be, and with a moving panorama always outside, which is Paris in itself.

You mention a letter from Miss Coutts as to Mrs. Brown's illness, which you say is "enclosed to Mrs. Charles Dickens."

It is not enclosed, and I am mad to know where she writes from that I may write to her. Pray set this right, for her uneasiness will be greatly intensified if she have no word from me.

I thought we were to give £1,700 for the house at Gad's Hill. Are we bound to £1,800? Considering the improvements to be made, it is a little too much, isn't it? I have a strong impression that at the utmost we were only to divide the difference, and not to pass £1,750. You will set me right if I am wrong. But I don't think I am.

I write very hastily, with the piano playing and Alfred looking for this.

Ever, my dear Wills, faithfully.

49, AVENUE DES CHAMPS ÉLYSÉES,

Wednesday, Oct. 24th, 1855.

Mr. W. H.
Wills.

MY DEAR WILLS,

In the Gad's Hill matter, I too would like to try effect of "not budging." *So do not go beyond the £1,700.* Considering what I should have to expend on the one hand, and the low price of stock on the other, I do not feel disposed to go beyond that mark. They won't let a purchaser escape for the sake of the £100, I think. And Austin was strongly of opinion, when I saw him last, that £1,700 was enough.

You cannot think how pleasant it is to me to find myself generally known and liked here. If I go into a shop to buy anything, and give my card, the officiating priest or priestess brightens up, and says: "*Ah! c'est l'écrivain célèbre! Monsieur porte un nom très-distingué. Mais! je suis honoré et intéressé de voir Monsieur Dick-in. Je lis un des livres de monsieur tous les jours*" (in the *Moniteur*). And a man who brought some little vases home last night, said: "*On connaît bien en France que Monsieur Dick-in prend sa position sur la dignité de la littérature. Ah! c'est grande chose! Et ses caractères*" (this was to Georgina, while she unpacked) "*sont si spirituellement tournées! Cette Madame Tojare*" (Todgers), "*ah! qu'elle est drôle et précisément comme une dame que je connais à Calais.*"

You cannot have any doubt about this place, if you will only recollect it is the great main road from the Place de la Concorde to the Barrière de l'Étoile.

Ever faithfully.

Monsieur
Regnier.

Wednesday, November 21st, 1855.

MY DEAR REGNIER,

In thanking you for the box you kindly sent me the day before yesterday, let me thank you a thousand times for the delight we derived from the representation of your beautiful and admirable piece. I have hardly ever been so affected and interested in any theatre. Its construction is in the highest degree excellent, the interest absorbing, and the whole conducted by a masterly hand to a touching and natural conclusion.

Through the whole story from beginning to end, I recognise the true spirit and feeling of an artist, and

I most heartily offer you and your fellow-labourer my felicitations on the success you have achieved. That it will prove a very great and a lasting one, I cannot for a moment doubt.

O my friend! If I could see an English actress with but one hundredth part of the nature and art of Madame Plessy, I should believe our English theatre to be in a fair way towards its regeneration. But I have no hope of ever beholding such a phenomenon. I may as well expect ever to see upon an English stage an accomplished artist, able to write and to embody what he writes, like you.

Faithfully yours ever.

49, AVENUE DES CHAMPS ELYSÉES, *Monday, Dec. 3rd, 1855.* Madame Viardot.

DEAR MADAME VIARDOT,

Mrs. Dickens tells me that you have only borrowed the first number of "Little Dorrit," and are going to send it back. Pray do nothing of the sort, and allow me to have the great pleasure of sending you the succeeding numbers as they reach me. I have had such delight in your great genius, and have so high an interest in it and admiration of it, that I am proud of the honour of giving you a moment's intellectual pleasure.

Believe me, very faithfully yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Sunday, Dec. 23rd, 1855.* The Hon. Mrs. Watson.

MY DEAR MRS. WATSON,

I have a moment in which to redeem my promise, of putting you in possession of my Little Friend No. 2,

before the general public. It is, of course, at the disposal of your circle, but until the month is out, is understood to be a prisoner in the castle.

If I had time to write anything, I should still quite vainly try to tell you what interest and happiness I had in once more seeing you among your dear children. Let me congratulate you on your Eton boys. They are so handsome, frank, and genuinely modest, that they charmed me. A kiss to the little fair-haired darling and the rest; the love of my heart to every stone in the old house.

Enormous effect at Sheffield. But really not a better audience perceptively than at Peterboro', for that could hardly be, but they were more enthusiastically demonstrative, and they took the line, "and to Tiny Tim who did NOT die," with a most prodigious shout and roll of thunder.

Ever, my dear Friend, most faithfully yours.

1856.

NARRATIVE.

CHARLES DICKENS having taken an *appartement* in Paris for the winter months, 49, Avenue des Champs Elysées, was there with his family until the middle of May. He much enjoyed this winter sojourn, meeting many old friends, making new friends, and interchanging hospitalities with the French artistic world. He had also many friends from England to visit him. Mr. Wilkie Collins had an *appartement de garçon* hard

by, and the two companions were constantly together. The Rev. James White and his family also spent their winter at Paris, having taken an *appartement* at 49, Avenue des Champs Elysées, and the girls of the two families had the same masters, and took their lessons together. After the Whites' departure, Mr. Macready paid Charles Dickens a visit, occupying the vacant *appartement*.

During this winter Charles Dickens was, however, constantly backwards and forwards between Paris and London on "Household Words" business, and was also at work on his "Little Dorrit."

While in Paris he sat for his portrait to the great Ary Scheffer. It was exhibited at the Royal Academy Exhibition of this year, and is now in the National Portrait Gallery.

The summer was again spent at Boulogne, and once more at the Villa des Moulineaux, where he received constant visits from English friends, Mr. Wilkie Collins taking up his quarters for many weeks at a little cottage in the garden; and there the idea of another play, to be acted at Tavistock House, was first started. Many of our letters for this year have reference to this play, and will show the interest which Charles Dickens took in it, and the immense amount of care and pains given by him to the careful carrying out of this favourite amusement.

The Christmas number of "Household Words," written by Charles Dickens and Mr. Collins, called "The Wreck of the *Golden Mary*," was planned by the two friends during this summer holiday.

It was in this year that one of the great wishes of

his life was to be realised, the much-coveted house—Gad's Hill Place—having been purchased by him, and the cheque written on the 14th of March—on a "Friday," as he writes to his sister-in-law, in the letter of this date. He frequently remarked that all the important, and so far fortunate, events of his life had happened to him on a Friday. So that, contrary to the usual superstition, that day had come to be looked upon by his family as his "lucky" day.

The allusion to the "plainness" of Miss Boyle's hand-writing is good-humouredly ironical; that lady's writing being by no means famous for its legibility.

The "Anne" mentioned in the letter to his sister-in-law, which follows the one to Miss Boyle, was the faithful servant who had lived with the family so long; and who, having left to be married the previous year, had found it a very difficult matter to recover from her sorrow at this parting. And the "godfather's present" was for a son of Mr. Edmund Yates.

"The Humble Petition" was written to Mr. Wilkie Collins during that gentleman's visit to Paris.

The explanation of the remark to Mr. Wills (6th April), that he had paid the money to Mr. Poole, is that Charles Dickens was the trustee through whom the dramatist received his pension.

The letter to the Duke of Devonshire has reference to the peace illuminations after the Crimean war.

The M. Forgues for whom, at Mr. Collins's request, he writes a short biography of himself, was the editor of the *Revue des Deux Mondes*.

The speech at the London Tavern was on behalf of the Artists' Benevolent Fund.

Miss Kate Macready had sent some clever poems to "Household words," with which Charles Dickens had been much pleased. He makes allusion to these, in our two remaining letters to Mr. Macready.

"I did write it for you" (letter to Mrs. Watson, 17th October), refers to that part of "Little Dorrit" which treats of the visit of the Dorrit family to the Great St. Bernard. An expedition which it will be remembered he made himself, in company with Mr. and Mrs. Watson and other friends.

The letter to Mrs. Horne refers to a joke about the name of a friend of this lady's, who had once been brought by her to Tavistock House. The letter to Mr. Mitton concerns the lighting of the little theatre at Tavistock House.

Our last letter is in answer to one from Mr. Kent, asking him to sit to Mr. John Watkins for his photograph. We should add, however, that he did subsequently give this gentleman some sittings.

49, CHAMPS ELYSÉES, *Sunday, Jan. 6th, 1856.* Mr. W. H. Wills.

MY DEAR WILLS,

I should like Morley to do a Strike article, and to work into it the greater part of what is here. But I cannot represent myself as holding the opinion that all strikes among this unhappy class of society, who find it so difficult to get a peaceful hearing, are always necessarily wrong, because I don't think so. To open a discussion of the question by saying that the men are "*of course* entirely and painfully in the

wrong," surely would be monstrous in any one. Show them to be in the wrong here, but in the name of the eternal heavens show why, upon the merits of this question. Nor can I possibly adopt the representation that these men are wrong because by throwing themselves out of work they throw other people, possibly without their consent. If such a principle had anything in it, there could have been no civil war, no raising by Hampden of a troop of horse, to the detriment of Buckinghamshire agriculture, no self-sacrifice in the political world. And O, good God, when ——— treats of the suffering of wife and children, can he suppose that these mistaken men don't feel it in the depths of their hearts, and don't honestly and honourably, most devoutly and faithfully believe that for those very children, when they shall have children, they are bearing all these miseries now!

I hear from Mrs. Fillonneau that her husband was obliged to leave town suddenly before he could get your parcel, consequently he has not brought it; and White's sovereigns—unless you have got them back again—are either lying out of circulation somewhere, or are being spent by somebody else. I will write again on Tuesday. My article is to begin the enclosed.

Ever faithfully.

Mr. Mark
Lemon.

49, CHAMPS ELYSÉES, PARIS, *Monday, Jan. 7th, 1856.*

MY DEAR MARK,

I want to know how "Jack and the Beanstalk" goes. I have a notion from a notice—a favourable notice, however—which I saw in *Galignani*, that Webster has let down the comic business.

In a piece at the Ambigu, called the "Rentrée à Paris," a mere scene in honour of the return of the troops from the Crimea the other day, there is a novelty which I think it worth letting you know of, as it is easily available, either for a serious or a comic interest—the introduction of a supposed electric telegraph. The scene is the railway terminus at Paris, with the electric telegraph office on the prompt side, and the clerks *with their backs to the audience*—much more real than if they were, as they infallibly would be, staring about the house—working the needles; and the little bell perpetually ringing. There are assembled to greet the soldiers, all the easily and naturally imagined elements of interest—old veteran fathers, young children, agonised mothers, sisters and brothers, girl lovers—each impatient to know of his or her own object of solicitude. Enter to these a certain marquis, full of sympathy for all, who says: "My friends, I am one of you. My brother has no commission yet. He is a common soldier. I wait for him as well as all brothers and sisters here wait for *their* brothers. Tell me whom you are expecting." Then they all tell him. Then he goes into the telegraph-office, and sends a message down the line to know how long the troops will be. Bell rings. Answer handed out on slip of paper. "Delay on the line. Troops will not arrive for a quarter of an hour." General disappointment. "But we have this brave electric telegraph, my friends," says the marquis. "Give me your little messages, and I'll send them off." General rush round the marquis. Exclamations: "How's Henri?" "My love to Georges;" "Has Guillaume forgotten Elise?" "Is my son wounded?" "Is my brother promoted?" etc. etc. Marquis composes

tumult. Sends message—such a regiment, such a company—“Elise’s love to Georges.” Little bell rings, slip of paper handed out—“Georges in ten minutes will embrace his Elise. Sends her a thousand kisses.” Marquis sends message—such a regiment, such a company—“Is my son wounded?” Little bell rings. Slip of paper handed out—“No. He has not yet upon him those marks of bravery in the glorious service of his country which his dear old father bears” (father being lamed and invalided). Last of all, the widowed mother. Marquis sends message—such a regiment, such a company—“Is my only son safe?” Little bell rings. Slip of paper handed out—“He was first upon the heights of Alma.” General cheer. Bell rings again, another slip of paper handed out. “He was made a sergeant at Inkermann.” Another cheer. Bell rings again, another slip of paper handed out. “He was made colour-sergeant at Sebastopol.” Another cheer. Bell rings again, another slip of paper handed out. “He was the first man who leaped with the French banner on the Malakhoff tower.” Tremendous cheer. Bell rings again, another slip of paper handed out. “But he was struck down there by a musket-ball, and——Troops have proceeded. Will arrive in half a minute after this.” Mother abandons all hope; general commiseration; troops rush in, down a platform; son only wounded, and embraces her.

As I have said, and as you will see, this is available for any purpose. But done with equal distinction and rapidity, it is a tremendous effect, and got by the simplest means in the world. There is nothing in the piece, but it was impossible not to be moved and excited by the telegraph part of it.

I hope you have seen something of Stanny, and have been to pantomimes with him, and have drunk to the absent Dick. I miss you, my dear old boy, at the play, woefully, and miss the walk home, and the partings at the corner of Tavistock Square. And when I go by myself, I come home stewing "Little Dorrit" in my head; and the best part of *my* play is (or ought to be) in Gordon Street.

I have written to Beaucourt about taking that breezy house—a little improved—for the summer, and I hope you and yours will come there often and stay there long. My present idea, if nothing should arise to unroot me sooner, is to stay here until the middle of May, then plant the family at Boulogne, and come with Catherine and Georgy home for two or three weeks. When I shall next run across I don't know, but I suppose next month.

We are up to our knees in mud here. Literally in vehement despair, I walked down the avenue outside the Barrière de l'Étoile here yesterday, and went straight on among the trees. I came back with top-boots of mud on. Nothing will cleanse the streets. Numbers of men and women are for ever scooping and sweeping in them, and they are always one lake of yellow mud. All my trousers go to the tailor's every day, and are ravelled out at the heels every night. Washing is awful.

Tell Mrs. Lemon, with my love, that I have bought her some Eau d'Or, in grateful remembrance of her knowing what it is, and crushing the tyrant of her existence by resolutely refusing to be put down when

that monster would have silenced her. You may imagine the loves and messages that are now being poured in upon me by all of them, so I will give none of them; though I am pretending to be very scrupulous about it, and am looking (I have no doubt) as if I were writing them down with the greatest care.

Ever affectionately.

Mr. W.
Wilkie
Collins.

49, CHAMPS ELYSÉES, *Saturday, Jan. 19th, 1856.*

MY DEAR COLLINS,

I had no idea you were so far on with your book, and heartily congratulate you on being within sight of land.

It is excessively pleasant to me to get your letter, as it opens a perspective of theatrical and other lounging evenings, and also of articles in "Household Words." It will not be the first time that we shall have got on well in Paris, and I hope it will not be by many a time the last.

I purpose coming over, early in February (as soon, in fact, as I shall have knocked out No. 5 of "Little D."), and therefore we can return in a jovial manner together. As soon as I know my day of coming over, I will write to you again, and (as the merchants—say Charley—would add) "communicate same" to you.

The lodging, *en garçon*, shall be duly looked up, and I shall of course make a point of finding it close here. There will be no difficulty in that. I will have concluded the treaty before starting for London, and will take it by the month, both because that is the cheapest

way, and because desirable places don't let for shorter terms.

I have been sitting to Scheffer to-day—conceive this, if you please, with No. 5 upon my soul—four hours!! I am so addleheaded and bored, that if you were here, I should propose an instantaneous rush to the Trois Frères. Under existing circumstances I have no consolation.

I think THE portrait* is the most astounding thing ever beheld upon this globe. It has been shrieked over by the united family as “Oh! the very image!” I went down to the *entresol* the moment I opened it, and submitted it to the Plorn—then engaged, with a half-franc musket, in capturing a Malakhoff of chairs. He looked at it very hard, and gave it as his opinion that it was Misser Hegg. We suppose him to have confounded the Colonel with Jollins. I met Madame Georges Sand the other day at a dinner got up by Madame Viardot for that great purpose. The human mind cannot conceive any one more astonishingly opposed to all my preconceptions. If I had been shown her in a state of repose, and asked what I thought her to be, I should have said: “The Queen’s monthly nurse.” *Au reste*, she has nothing of the *bas bleu* about her, and is very quiet and agreeable.

The way in which mysterious Frenchmen call and want to embrace me, suggests to any one who knows me intimately, such infamous lurking, slinking, getting behind doors, evading, lying—so much mean resort to

* Of Mr. Wilkie Collins.

craven flights, dastard subterfuges, and miserable poltroonery—on my part, that I merely suggest the arrival of cards like this:

Forgues
homme de lettres

or

Broussé
homme de l'Institut

or

Cezibus Satalanternois
tête des deux arts
—very fine miniature. Dressed & brownish with, on the fl. leaf.

Jaubaud

P Hommage à l'illustre romancier d'Angleterre
Charles De Keane.

—and I then write letters of terrific *empressement*, with assurances of all sorts of profound considerations, and never by any chance become visible to the naked eye.

At the Porte St. Martin they are doing the “Orestes,” put into French verse by Alexandre Dumas. Really one of the absurdest things I ever saw. The scene of the tomb, with all manner of classical females, in black, grouping themselves on the lid, and on the steps, and on each other, and in every conceivable aspect of obtrusive impossibility, is just like the window of one of

those artists in hair, who address the friends of deceased persons. To-morrow week a fête is coming off at the Jardin d'Hiver, next door but one here, which I must certainly go to. The fête of the company of the Folies Nouvelles! The ladies of the company are to keep stalls, and are to sell to Messieurs the Amateurs orange-water and lemonade. Paul le Grand is to promenade among the company, dressed as Pierrot. Kalm, the big-faced comic singer, is to do the like, dressed as a Russian Cossack. The entertainments are to conclude with "La Polka des Bêtes féroces, par la Troupe entière des Folies Nouvelles." I wish, without invasion of the rights of British subjects, or risk of war, —— could be seized by French troops, brought over, and made to assist.

The *appartement* has not grown any bigger since you last had the joy of beholding me, and upon my honour and word I live in terror of asking —— to dinner, lest she should not be able to get in at the dining-room door. I *think* (am not sure) the dining-room would hold her, if she could be once passed in, but I don't see my way to that. Nevertheless, we manage our own family dinners very snugly there, and have good ones, as I think you will say, every day at half-past five.

I have a notion that we may knock out a *series* of descriptions for H. W. without much trouble. It is very difficult to get into the Catacombs, but my name is so well known here that I think I may succeed. I find that the guillotine can be got set up in private, like Punch's show. What do you think of *that* for an article? I find myself underlining words constantly.

It is not my nature. It is mere imbecility after the four hours' sitting.

All unite in kindest remembrances to you, your mother and brother.

Ever cordially.

Miss Mary
Boyle.

49, CHAMPS ELYSÉES, PARIS, *Jan. 28th*, 1856.

MY DEAR MARY,

I am afraid you will think me an abandoned ruffian for not having acknowledged your more than handsome warm-hearted letter before now. But, as usual, I have been so occupied, and so glad to get up from my desk and wallow in the mud (at present about six feet deep here), that pleasure correspondence is just the last thing in the world I have had leisure to take to. Business correspondence with all sorts and conditions of men and women, O my Mary! is one of the dragons I am perpetually fighting; and the more I throw it, the more it stands upon its hind legs, rampant, and throws me.

Yes, on that bright cold morning when I left Peterboro', I felt that the best thing I could do was to say that word that I would do anything in an honest way to avoid saying, at one blow, and make off. I was so sorry to leave you all! You can scarcely imagine what a chill and blank I felt on that Monday evening at Rockingham. It was so sad to me, and engendered a constraint so melancholy and peculiar, that I doubt if I were ever much more out of sorts in my life. Next morning, when it was light and sparkling out of doors, I felt more at home again. But when I came in from seeing poor dear Watson's grave, Mrs. Watson asked me to go up in the gallery, which I had last

seen in the days of our merry play. We went up, and walked into the very part he had made and was so fond of, and she looked out of one window and I looked out of another, and for the life of me I could not decide in my own heart whether I should console or distress her by going and taking her hand, and saying something of what was naturally in my mind. So I said nothing, and we came out again, and on the whole perhaps it was best; for I have no doubt we understood each other very well without speaking a word.

Sheffield was a tremendous success and an admirable audience. They made me a present of table-cutlery after the reading was over; and I came away by the mail-train within three-quarters of an hour, changing my dress and getting on my wrappers partly in the fly, partly at the inn, partly on the platform. When we got among the Lincolnshire fens it began to snow. That changed to sleet, that changed to rain; the frost was all gone as we neared London, and the mud has all come. At two or three o'clock in the morning I stopped at Peterboro' again, and thought of you all disconsolately. The lady in the refreshment-room was very hard upon me, harder even than those fair enslavers usually are. She gave me a cup of tea, as if I were a hyena and she my cruel keeper with a strong dislike to me. I mingled my tears with it, and had a petrified bun of enormous antiquity in miserable meekness.

It is clear to me that climates are gradually assimilating over a great part of the world, and that in the most miserable part of our year there is very little to choose between London and Paris, except that Lon-

don is not so muddy. I have never seen dirtier or worse weather than we have had here since I returned. In desperation I went out to the Barrières last Sunday on a headlong walk, and came back with my very eyebrows smeared with mud. Georgina is usually invisible during the walking time of the day. A turned-up nose may be seen in the midst of splashes, but nothing more.

I am settling to work again, and my horrible restlessness immediately assails me. It belongs to such times. As I was writing the preceding page, it suddenly came into my head that I would get up and go to Calais. I don't know why; the moment I got there I should want to go somewhere else. But, as my friend the Boots says (see Christmas number "Household Words"): "When you come to think what a game you've been up to ever since you was in your own cradle, and what a poor sort of a chap you were, and how it's always yesterday with you, or else to-morrow, and never to-day, that's where it is."

My dear Mary, would you favour me with the name and address of the professor that taught you writing, for I want to improve myself? Many a hand have I seen with many characteristics of beauty in it—some loopy, some dashy, some large, some small, some sloping to the right, some sloping to the left, some not sloping at all; but what I like in *your* hand, Mary, is its plainness, it is like print. Them as runs may read just as well as if they stood still. I should have thought it was copper-plate if I hadn't known you. They send all sorts of messages from here, and so do I, with my best regards to Bedgy and pardner

and the blessed babbies. When shall we meet again, I wonder, and go somewhere! Ah!

Believe me ever, my dear Mary,

Yours truly and affectionately,

JOE.

(That doesn't look plain.)

JOE.

"HOUSEHOLD WORDS," *Friday, Feb. 8th, 1856.*

Miss
Hogarth.

MY DEAR GEORGY,

I must write this at railroad speed, for I have been at it all day, and have numbers of letters to cram into the next half-hour. I began the morning in the City, for the Theatrical Fund; went on to Shepherd's Bush; came back to leave cards for Mr. Baring and Mr. Bates; ran across Piccadilly to Stratton Street, stayed there an hour, and shot off here. I have been in four cabs to-day, at a cost of thirteen shillings. Am going to dine with Mark and Webster at half-past four, and finish the evening at the Adelphi.

The dinner was very successful. Charley was in great force, and floored Peter Cunningham and the Audit Office on a question about some bill transactions with Baring's. The other guests were B. and E., Shirley Brooks, Forster, and that's all. The dinner admirable. I never had a better. All the wine I sent down from Tavistock House. Anne waited, and looked well and happy, very much brighter altogether. It gave me great pleasure to see her so improved. Just before dinner I got all the letters from home. They could not have arrived more opportunely.

The godfather's present looks charming now it is

engraved, and John is just now going off to take it to Mrs. Yates. To-morrow Wills and I are going to Gad's Hill. It will occupy the whole day, and will just leave me time to get home to dress for dinner.

And that's all that I have to say, except that the first number of "Little Dorrit" has gone to forty thousand, and the other one fast following.

My best love to Catherine, and to Mamey and Katey, and Walter and Harry, and the noble Plorn. I am grieved to hear about his black eye, and fear that I shall find it in the green and purple state on my return.

Ever affectionately.

THE HUMBLE PETITION OF CHARLES DICKENS,
A DISTRESSED FOREIGNER,

SHEWETH,

That your Petitioner has not been able to write one word to-day, or to fashion forth the dimmest shade of the faintest ghost of an idea.

That your Petitioner is therefore desirous of being taken out, and is not at all particular where.

That your Petitioner, being imbecile, says no more. But will ever, etc. (whatever that may be).

PARIS, *March 3rd*, 1856.

Mr.
Douglas
Jerrold.

"HOUSEHOLD WORDS" OFFICE, *March 6th*, 1856.

MY DEAR JERROLD,

Buckstone has been with me to-day in a state of demi-semi-distraction, by reason of Macready's dreading his asthma so much as to excuse himself (of necessity, I know) from taking the chair for the fund

on the occasion of their next dinner. I have promised to back Buckstone's entreaty to you to take it; and although I know that you have an objection which you once communicated to me, I still hold (as I did then) that it is a reason *for* and not against. Pray reconsider the point. Your position in connection with dramatic literature has always suggested to me that there would be a great fitness and grace in your appearing in this post. I am convinced that the public would regard it in that light, and I particularly ask you to reflect that we never can do battle with the Lords, if we will not bestow ourselves to go into places which they have long monopolised. Now pray discuss this matter with yourself once more. If you can come to a favourable conclusion I shall be really delighted, and will of course come from Paris to be by you; if you cannot come to a favourable conclusion I shall be really sorry, though I of course most readily defer to your right to regard such a matter from your own point of view.

Ever faithfully yours.

"HOUSEHOLD WORDS" OFFICE, *Tuesday, March 11th, 1856.* * Miss Hogarth.

MY DEAR GEORGY,

I have been in bed half the day with my cold, which is excessively violent, consequently have to write in a great hurry to save the post.

Tell Catherine that I have the most prodigious, overwhelming, crushing, astounding, blinding, deafening, pulverising, scarifying secret, of which Forster is the hero, imaginable by the whole efforts of the whole

* This note was written after hearing from Mr. Forster of his intended marriage.

British population. It is a thing of that kind that, after I knew it, (from himself) this morning, I lay down flat as if an engine and tender had fallen upon me.

Love to Catherine (not a word of Forster before anyone else), and to Mamey, Katey, Harry, and the noble Plorn. Tell Collins with my kind regards that Forster has just pronounced to me that "Collins is a decidedly clever fellow." I hope he is a better fellow in health, too. Ever affectionately.

Miss
Hogarth.

"HOUSEHOLD WORDS," *Friday, March 14th, 1856.*

MY DEAR GEORGY,

I am amazed to hear of the snow (I don't know why, but it excited John this morning beyond measure); though we have had the same east wind here, and *the* cold and *my* cold have both been intense.

Yesterday evening Webster, Mark, Stanny, and I went to the Olympic, where the Wigans ranged us in a row in a gorgeous and immense private box, and where we saw "Still Waters Run Deep." I laughed (in a conspicuous manner) to that extent at Emery, when he received the dinner-company, that the people were more amused by me than by the piece. I don't think I ever saw anything meant to be funny that struck me as so extraordinarily droll. I couldn't get over it at all. After the piece we went round, by Wigan's invitation, to drink with him. It being positively impossible to get Stanny off the stage, we stood in the wings during the burlesque. Mrs. Wigan seemed really glad to see her old manager, and the company overwhelmed him with embraces. They had nearly all been at the meeting in the morning.

I have seen Charley only twice since I came to London, having regularly been in bed until mid-day. To my amazement, my eye fell upon him at the Adelphi yesterday.

This day I have paid the purchase-money for Gad's Hill Place. After drawing the cheque, I turned round to give it to Wills (£1,790), and said: "Now isn't it an extraordinary thing—look at the day—Friday! I have been nearly drawing it half-a-dozen times, when the lawyers have not been ready, and here it comes round upon a Friday, as a matter of course."

Kiss the noble Plorn a dozen times for me, and tell him I drank his health yesterday, and wished him many happy returns of the day; also that I hope he will not have broken all his toys before I come back.

Ever affectionately.

49, CHAMPS ELYSÉES, PARIS, *Saturday, March 22nd*, 1856. Mr. W. C. Macready.

MY DEAR MACREADY,

I want you—you being quite well again, as I trust you are, and resolute to come to Paris—so to arrange your order of march as to let me know beforehand when you will come, and how long you will stay. We owe Scribe and his wife a dinner, and I should like to pay the debt when you are with us. Ary Scheffer too would be delighted to see you again. If I could arrange for a certain day I would secure them. We cannot afford (you and I, I mean) to keep much company, because we shall have to look in at a theatre or so, I daresay!

It would suit my work best, if I could keep myself clear until Monday, the 7th of April. But in case that

day should be too late for the beginning of your brief visit with a deference to any other engagements you have in contemplation, then fix an earlier one, and I will make "Little Dorrit" curtsy to it. My recent visit to London and my having only just now come back have thrown me a little behindhand; but I hope to come up with a wet sail in a few days.

You should have seen the ruins of Covent Garden Theatre. I went in the moment I got to London—four days after the fire. Although the audience part and the stage were so tremendously burnt out that there was not a piece of wood half the size of a lucifer-match for the eye to rest on, though nothing whatever remained but bricks and smelted iron lying on a great black desert, the theatre still looked so wonderfully like its old self grown gigantic that I never saw so strange a sight. The wall dividing the front from the stage still remained, and the iron pass-doors stood ajar in an impossible and inaccessible frame. The arches that supported the stage were there, and the arches that supported the pit; and in the centre of the latter lay something like a Titanic grape-vine that a hurricane had pulled up by the roots, twisted, and flung down there; this was the great chandelier. Gye had kept the men's wardrobe at the top of the house over the great entrance staircase; when the roof fell in it came down bodily, and all that part of the ruins was like an old Babylonian pavement, bright rays tessellating the black ground, sometimes in pieces so large that I could make out the clothes in the "Trovatore."

I should run on for a couple of hours if I had to describe the spectacle as I saw it, wherefore I will im-

mediately muzzle myself. All here unite in kindest loves to dear Miss Macready, to Katie, Lillie, Benvenuta, my godson, and the noble Johnny. We are charmed to hear such happy accounts of Willy and Ned, and send our loving remembrance to them in the next letters. All Parisian novelties you shall see and hear for yourself.

Ever, my dearest Macready,

Your affectionate Friend.

P.S.—Mr. F.'s aunt sends her defiant respects.

49, AVENUE DES CHAMPS ELYSÉES, PARIS,

Thursday Night, March 27th, 1856 (after post time).

Mr. W. C.
Macready.

MY DEAREST MACREADY,

If I had had any idea of your coming (see how naturally I use the word when I am three hundred miles off!) to London so soon, I would never have written one word about the jump over next week. I am vexed that I did so, but as I did I will not now propose a change in the arrangements, as I know how methodical you tremendously old fellows are. That's your secret I suspect. That's the way in which the blood of the Mirabels mounts in your aged veins, even at your time of life.

How charmed I shall be to see you, and we all shall be, I will not attempt to say. On that expected Sunday you will lunch at Amiens but not dine, because we shall wait dinner for you, and you will merely have to tell that driver in the glazed hat to come straight here. When the Whites left I added their little apartment to this little apartment, consequently you shall have a snug bedroom (is it not wait-

ing expressly for you?) overlooking the Champs Elysées. As to the arm-chair in my heart, no man on earth——but, good God! you know all about it.

You will find us in the queerest of little rooms all alone, except that the son of Collins the painter (who writes a good deal in "Household Words") dines with us every day. Scheffer and Scribe shall be admitted for one evening, because they know how to appreciate you. The Emperor we will not ask unless you expressly wish it; it makes a fuss.

If you have no appointed hotel at Boulogne, go to the Hôtel des Bains, there demand "Marguerite," and tell her that I commended you to her special care. It is the best house within my experience in France; Marguerite the best housekeeper in the world.

I shall charge at "Little Dorrit" to-morrow with new spirits. The sight of you is good for my boyish eyes, and the thought of you for my dawning mind. Give the enclosed lines a welcome, then send them on to Sherborne.

Ever yours most affectionately and truly.

Mr. W. H.
Wills.

49, CHAMPS ELYSÉES, PARIS, *Sunday, April 6th, 1856.*

MY DEAR WILLS,

CHRISTMAS.

Collins and I have a mighty original notion (mine in the beginning) for another play at Tavistock House. I propose opening on Twelfth Night the theatrical season of that great establishment. But now a tremendous question. Is

MRS. WILLS!

game to do a Scotch housekeeper, in a supposed

country-house, with Mary, Katey, Georgina, etc.? If she can screw her courage up to saying "Yes," that country-house opens the piece in a singular way, and that Scotch housekeeper's part shall flow from the present pen. If she says "No" (but she won't), no Scotch housekeeper can be. The Tavistock House season of four nights pauses for a reply. Scotch song (new and original) of Scotch housekeeper would pervade the piece.

YOU
had better pause for breath.

Ever faithfully.

POOLE.

I have paid him his money. Here is the proof of life. If you will get me the receipt to sign, the money can go to my account at Coutts's.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Monday, May 5th*, 1856.

Mrs.
Charles
Dickens.

MY DEAR CATHERINE,

I did nothing at Dover (except for "Household Words"), and have not begun "Little Dorrit," No. 8, yet. But I took twenty-mile walks in the fresh air, and perhaps in the long run did better than if I had been at work. The report concerning Scheffer's portrait I had from Ward. It is in the best place in the largest room, but I find the *general* impression of the artists exactly mine. They almost all say that it wants something; that nobody could mistake whom it was meant for, but that it has something disappointing in it, etc. etc. Stanfield likes it better than any of the other painters, I think. His own picture is magnificent. And Frith, in a "Little Child's Birthday Party," is quite delightful. There are many interesting pictures. When

you see Scheffer, tell him from me that Eastlake, in his speech at the dinner, referred to the portrait as "a contribution from a distinguished man of genius in France, worthy of himself and of his subject."

I did the maddest thing last night, and am deeply penitent this morning. We stayed at Webster's till any hour, and they wanted me, at last, to make punch, which couldn't be done when the jug was brought, because (to Webster's burning indignation) there was only one lemon in the house. Hereupon I then and there besought the establishment in general to come and drink punch on Thursday night, after the play; on which occasion it will become necessary to furnish fully the table with some cold viands from Fortnum and Mason's. Mark has looked in since I began this note, to suggest that the great festival may come off at "Household Words" instead. I am inclined to think it a good idea, and that I shall transfer the locality to that business establishment. But I am at present distracted with doubts and torn by remorse.

The school-room and dining-room I have brought into habitable condition and comfortable appearance. Charley and I breakfast at half-past eight, and meet again at dinner when he does not dine in the City, or has no engagement. He looks very well.

The audiences at Gye's are described to me as absolute marvels of coldness. No signs of emotion can be hammered out of them. Panizzi sat next me at the Academy dinner, and took it very ill that I disparaged——. The amateurs here are getting up another pantomime, but quarrel so violently among themselves that I doubt its ever getting on the stage. Webster expounded his scheme for rebuilding the

Adelphi to Stanfield and myself last night, and I felt bound to tell him that I thought it wrong from beginning to end. This is all the theatrical news I know.

I write by this post to Georgy. Love to Mamey, Katey, Harry, and the noble Plorn. I should be glad to see him here.

Ever affectionately.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Monday, May 5th*, 1856.

Miss
Hogarth.

MY DEAR GEORGY,

You will not be much surprised to hear that I have done nothing yet (except for H. W.), and have only just settled down into a corner of the school-room. The extent to which John and I wallowed in dust for four hours yesterday morning, getting things neat and comfortable about us, you may faintly imagine. At four in the afternoon came Stanfield, to whom I no sooner described the notion of the new play, than he immediately upset all my new arrangements by making a proscenium of the chairs, and planning the scenery with walking-sticks. One of the least things he did was getting on the top of the long table, and hanging over the bar in the middle window where that top sash opens, as if he had got a hinge in the middle of his body. He is immensely excited on the subject. Mark had a farce ready for the managerial perusal, but it won't do.

I went to the Dover theatre on Friday night, which was a miserable spectacle. The pit is boarded over, and it is a drinking and smoking place. It was "for the benefit of Mrs. ——," and the town had been very extensively placarded with "Don't forget Friday." I made out four and ninepence (I am serious) in the

house, when I went in. We may have warmed up in the course of the evening to twelve shillings. A Jew played the grand piano; Mrs. —— sang no end of songs (with not a bad voice, poor creature); Mr. —— sang comic songs fearfully, and danced clog hornpipes capitally; and a miserable woman, shivering in a shawl and bonnet, sat in the side-boxes all the evening, nursing Master ——, aged seven months. It was a most forlorn business, and I should have contributed a sovereign to the treasury, if I had known how.

I walked to Deal and back that day, and on the previous day walked over the downs towards Canterbury in a gale of wind. It was better than still weather after all, being wonderfully fresh and free.

If the Plorn were sitting at this school-room window in the corner, he would see more cats in an hour than he ever saw in his life. *I* never saw so many, I think, as I have seen since yesterday morning.

There is a painful picture of a great deal of merit (Egg has bought it) in the exhibition, painted by the man who did those little interiors of Forster's. It is called "The Death of Chatterton." The dead figure is a good deal like Arthur Stone; and I was touched on Saturday to see that tender old file standing before it, crying under his spectacles at the idea of seeing his son dead. It was a very tender manifestation of his gentle old heart.

This sums up my news, which is no news at all. Kiss the Plorn for me, and expound to him that I am always looking forward to meeting him again, among the birds and flowers in the garden on the side of the hill at Boulogne.

Ever affectionately.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Sunday, June 1st, 1856.*The Duke
of Devon-
shire.

MY DEAR DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE,

Allow me to thank you with all my heart for your kind remembrance of me on Thursday night. My house was already engaged to Miss Coutts's, and I to—the top of St. Paul's, where the sight was most wonderful! But seeing that your cards gave me leave to present some person not named, I conferred them on my excellent friend Dr. Elliotson, whom I found with some fireworkless little boys in a desolate condition, and raised to the seventh heaven of happiness. You are so fond of making people happy, that I am sure you approve.

Always your faithful and much obliged.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *June 6th, 1856.*Mr. W.
Wilkie
Collins.

MY DEAR COLLINS,

I have never seen anything about myself in print which has much correctness in it—any biographical account of myself I mean. I do not supply such particulars when I am asked for them by editors and compilers, simply because I am asked for them every day. If you want to prime Forgues, you may tell him without fear of anything wrong, that I was born at Portsmouth on the 7th of February, 1812; that my father was in the Navy Pay Office; that I was taken by him to Chatham when I was very young, and lived and was educated there till I was twelve or thirteen, I suppose; that I was then put to a school near London, where (as at other places) I distinguished myself like a brick; that I was put in the office of a solicitor, a friend of my father's, and didn't much like it; and

after a couple of years (as well as I can remember) applied myself with a celestial or diabolical energy to the study of such things as would qualify me to be a first-rate parliamentary reporter—at that time a calling pursued by many clever men who were young at the Bar; that I made my début in the gallery (at about eighteen, I suppose), engaged on a voluminous publication no longer in existence, called *The Mirror of Parliament*; that when *The Morning Chronicle* was purchased by Sir John Easthope and acquired a large circulation, I was engaged there, and that I remained there until I had begun to publish “Pickwick,” when I found myself in a condition to relinquish that part of my labours; that I left the reputation behind me of being the best and most rapid reporter ever known, and that I could do anything in that way under any sort of circumstances, and often did. (I daresay I am at this present writing the best shorthand writer in the world.)

That I began, without any interest or introduction of any kind, to write fugitive pieces for the old “Monthly Magazine,” when I was in the gallery for *The Mirror of Parliament*; that my faculty or descriptive writing was seized upon the moment I joined *The Morning Chronicle*, and that I was liberally paid there and handsomely acknowledged, and wrote the greater part of the short descriptive “Sketches by Boz” in that paper; that I had been a writer when I was a mere baby, and always an actor from the same age; that I married the daughter of a writer to the signet in Edinburgh, who was the great friend and assistant of Scott, and who first made Lockhart known to him.

And that here I am,

Finally, if you want any dates of publication of books, tell Wills and he'll get them for you.

This is the first time I ever set down even these particulars, and, glancing them over, I feel like a wild beast in a caravan describing himself in the keeper's absence.

Ever faithfully.

P.S.—I made a speech last night at the London Tavern, at the end of which all the company sat holding their napkins to their eyes with one hand, and putting the other into their pockets. A hundred people or so contributed nine hundred pounds then and there.

VILLA DES MOULINEAUX, BOULOGNE,

Sunday, June 15th, 1856.

Mr. Mark
Lemon.

MY DEAR OLD BOY,

This place is beautiful—a burst of roses. Your friend Beaucourt (who *will not* put on his hat), has thinned the trees and greatly improved the garden. Upon my life, I believe there are at least twenty distinct smoking-spots expressly made in it.

And as soon as you can see your day in next month for coming over with Stanny and Webster, will you let them both know? I should not be very much surprised if I were to come over and fetch you, when I know what your day is. Indeed, I don't see how you could get across properly without me.

There is a fête here to-night in honour of the Imperial baptism, and there will be another to-morrow. The Plorn has put on two bits of ribbon (one pink and one blue), which he calls "companys," to celebrate the

occasion. The fact that the receipts of the fêtes are to be given to the sufferers by the late floods reminds me that you will find at the passport office a tin-box, condescendingly and considerately labelled in English:

FOR THE OVERFLOWINGS,
which the chief officer clearly believes to mean, for the sufferers from the inundations.

I observe more Mingles in the laundresses' shops, and one inscription, which looks like the name of a duet or chorus in a playbill, "Here they mingle."

Will you congratulate Mrs. Lemon, with our loves, on her gallant victory over the recreant cabman?

Walter has turned up, rather brilliant on the whole; and that (with shoals of remembrances and messages which I don't deliver) is all my present intelligence.

Ever affectionately.

Mr. Mark
Lemon.

H. W. OFFICE, *July 2nd*, 1856.

MY DEAR MARK,

I am concerned to hear that you are ill, that you sit down before fires and shiver, and that you have stated times for doing so, like the demons in the melodramas, and that you mean to take a week to get well in.

Make haste about it, like a dear fellow, and keep up your spirits, because I have made a bargain with Stanny and Webster that they shall come to Boulogne to-morrow week, Thursday the 10th, and stay a week. And you know how much pleasure we shall all miss if you are not among us—at least for some part of the time.

If you find any unusually light appearance in the

air at Brighton, it is a distant refraction (I have no doubt) of the gorgeous and shining surface of Tavistock House, now transcendently painted. The theatre partition is put up, and is a work of such terrific solidity, that I suppose it will be dug up, ages hence, from the ruins of London, by that Australian of Macaulay's who is to be impressed by its ashes. I have wandered through the spectral halls of the Tavistock mansion two nights, with feelings of the profoundest depression. I have breakfasted there, like a criminal in Pentonville (only not so well). It is more like Westminster Abbey by midnight than the lowest-spirited man—say you at present for example—can well imagine.

There has been a wonderful robbery at Folkestone, by the new manager of the Pavilion, who succeeded Giovannini. He had in keeping £16,000 of a foreigner's, and bolted with it, as he supposed, but in reality with only £1,400 of it. The Frenchman had previously bolted with the whole, which was the property of his mother. With him to England the Frenchman brought a "lady," who was, all the time and at the same time, endeavouring to steal all the money from him and bolt with it herself. The details are amazing, and all the money (a few pounds excepted) has been got back.

They will be full of sympathy and talk about you when I get home, and I shall tell them that I send their loves beforehand. They are all enclosed. The moment you feel hearty, just write me that word by post. I shall be so delighted to receive it.

Ever, my dear Boy, your affectionate Friend.

Mr. Walter
Savage
Landor.

VILLA DES MOULINEAUX, BOULOGNE,

Saturday Evening, July 5th, 1856.

MY DEAR LANDOR,

I write to you so often in my books, and my writing of letters is usually so confined to the numbers that I *must* write, and in which I have no kind of satisfaction, that I am afraid to think how long it is since we exchanged a direct letter. But talking to your namesake this very day at dinner, it suddenly entered my head that I would come into my room here as soon as dinner should be over, and write, "My dear Landor, how are you?" for the pleasure of having the answer under your own hand. That you *do* write, and that pretty often, I know beforehand. Else why do I read *The Examiner*?

We were in Paris from October to May (I perpetually flying between that city and London), and there we found out, by a blessed accident, that your godson was horribly deaf. I immediately consulted the principal physician of the Deaf and Dumb Institution there (one of the best aurists in Europe), and he kept the boy for three months, and took unheard-of pains with him. He is now quite recovered, has done extremely well at school, has brought home a prize in triumph, and will be eligible to "go up" for his India examination soon after next Easter. Having a direct appointment, he will probably be sent out soon after he has passed, and so will fall into that strange life "up the country," before he well knows he is alive, which indeed seems to be rather an advanced stage of knowledge.

And there in Paris, at the same time, I found Marguerite Power and Little Nelly, living with their mother

and a pretty sister, in a very small, neat apartment, and working (as Marguerite told me) hard for a living. All that I saw of them filled me with respect, and revived the tenderest remembrances of Gore House. They are coming to pass two or three weeks here for a country rest, next month. We had many long talks concerning Gore House, and all its bright associations; and I can honestly report that they hold no one in more gentle and affectionate remembrance than you. Marguerite is still handsome, though she had the small-pox two or three years ago, and bears the traces of it here and there, by daylight. Poor little Nelly (the quicker and more observant of the two) shows some little tokens of a broken-off marriage in a face too careworn for her years, but is a very winning and sensible creature.

We are expecting Mary Boyle too, shortly.

I have just been propounding to Forster if it is not a wonderful testimony to the homely force of truth, that one of the most popular books on earth has nothing in it to make anyone laugh or cry? Yet I think, with some confidence, that you never did either over any passage in "Robinson Crusoe." In particular, I took Friday's death as one of the least tender and (in the true sense) least sentimental things ever written. It is a book I read very much; and the wonder of its prodigious effect on me and everyone, and the admiration thereof, grows on me the more I observe this curious fact.

Kate and Georgina send you their kindest loves, and smile approvingly on me from the next room, as I bend over my desk. My dear Landor, you see many I daresay, and hear from many I have no doubt, who

love you heartily; but we silent people in the distance never forget you. Do not forget us, and let us exchange affection at least.

Ever your Admirer and Friend.

The Duke
of Devon-
shire.

VILLA DES MOULINEAUX, NEAR BOULOGNE,

Saturday Night, July 5th, 1856.

MY DEAR DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE,

From this place where I am writing my way through the summer, in the midst of rosy gardens and sea airs, I cannot forbear writing to tell you with what uncommon pleasure I received your interesting letter, and how sensible I always am of your kindness and generosity. You were always in the mind of my household during your illness; and to have so beautiful, and fresh, and manly an assurance of your recovery from it, under your own hand, is a privilege and delight that I will say no more of.

I am so glad you like Flora. It came into my head one day that we have all had our Floras, and that it was a half-serious, half-ridiculous truth which had never been told. It is a wonderful gratification to me to find that everybody knows her. Indeed, some people seem to think I have done them a personal injury, and that their individual Floras (God knows where they are, or who!) are each and all Little Dorrit's.

We were all grievously disappointed that you were ill when we played Mr. Collins's "Lighthouse" at my house. If you had been well, I should have waited upon you with my humble petition that you would come and see it; and if you had come I think you would have cried, which would have charmed me. I hope to produce another play at home next Christmas,

and if I can only persuade you to see it from a special arm-chair, and can only make you wretched, my satisfaction will be intense. May I tell you, to beguile a moment, of a little "Tag," or end of a piece, I saw in Paris this last winter, which struck me as the prettiest I had ever met with? The piece was not a new one, but a revival at the Vaudeville—"Les Mémoires du Diable." Admirably constructed, very interesting, and extremely well played. The plot is, that a certain M. Robin has come into possession of the papers of a deceased lawyer, and finds some relating to the wrongful withholding of an estate from a certain baroness, and to certain other frauds (involving even the denial of the marriage to the deceased baron, and the tarnishing of his good name) which are so very wicked that he binds them up in a book and labels them "Mémoires du Diable." Armed with this knowledge he goes down to the desolate old château in the country—part of the wrested-away estate—from which the baroness and her daughter are going to be ejected. He informs the mother that he can right her and restore the property, but must have, as his reward, her daughter's hand in marriage. She replies: "I cannot promise my daughter to a man of whom I know nothing. The gain would be an unspeakable happiness, but I resolutely decline the bargain." The daughter, however, has observed all, and she comes forward and says: "Do what you have promised my mother you can do, and I am yours." Then the piece goes on to its development, in an admirable way, through the unmasking of all the hypocrites. Now, M. Robin, partly through his knowledge of the secret ways of the old château (derived from the lawyer's papers), and partly

through his going to a masquerade as the devil—the better to explode what he knows on the hypocrites—is supposed by the servants at the château really to be the devil. At the opening of the last act he suddenly appears there before the young lady, and she screams, but, recovering and laughing, says: “You are not really the ——?” “Oh dear no!” he replies, “have no connection with him. But these people down here are so frightened and absurd! See this little toy on the table; I open it; here’s a little bell. They have a notion that whenever this bell rings I shall appear. Very ignorant, is it not?” “Very, indeed,” says she. “Well,” says M. Robin, “if you should want me very much to appear, try the bell, if only for a jest. Will you promise?” Yes, she promises, and the play goes on. At last he has righted the baroness completely, and has only to hand her the last document, which proves her marriage and restores her good name. Then he says: “Madame, in the progress of these endeavours I have learnt the happiness of doing good for its own sake. I made a necessary bargain with you; I release you from it. I have done what I undertook to do. I wish you and your amiable daughter all happiness. Adieu! I take my leave.” Bows himself out. People on the stage astonished. Audience astonished—incensed. The daughter is going to cry, when she looks at the box on the table, remembers the bell, runs to it and rings it, and he rushes back and takes her to his heart; upon which we all cry with pleasure, and then laugh heartily.

This looks dreadfully long, and perhaps you know it already. If so, I will endeavour to make amends with Flora in future numbers.

Mrs. Dickens and her sister beg to present their remembrances to your Grace, and their congratulations on your recovery. I saw Paxton now and then when you were ill, and always received from him most encouraging accounts. I don't know how heavy he is going to be (I mean in the scale), but I begin to think Daniel Lambert must have been in his family. Ever your Grace's faithful and obliged.

VILLA DES MOULINEAUX, BOULOGNE,

Tuesday, July 8th, 1856.

Mr. W. C.
Macready.

MY DEAREST MACREADY,

I perfectly agree with you in your appreciation of Katie's poem, and shall be truly delighted to publish it in "Household Words." It shall go into the very next number we make up. We are a little in advance (to enable Wills to get a holiday), but as I remember, the next number made up will be published in three weeks.

We are pained indeed to read your reference to my poor boy. God keep him and his father. I trust he is not conscious of much suffering himself. If that be so, it is, in the midst of the distress, a great comfort.

"Little Dorrit" keeps me pretty busy, as you may suppose. The beginning of No. 10—the first line—now lies upon my desk. It would not be easy to increase upon the pains I take with her anyhow.

We are expecting Stanfield on Thursday, and Peter Cunningham and his wife on Monday. I would we were expecting you? This is as pretty and odd a little French country house as could be found anywhere; and the gardens are most beautiful.

In "Household Words," next week, pray read "The Diary of Anne Rodway" (in two not long parts). It is by Collins, and I think possesses great merit and real pathos.

Being in town the other day, I saw Gye by accident, and told him, when he praised —— to me, that she was a very bad actress. "Well!" said he, "*you* may say anything, but if anybody else had told me that I should have stared." Nevertheless, I derived an impression from his manner that she had not been a profitable speculation in respect of money. That very same day Stanfield and I dined alone together at the Garrick, and drank your health. We had had a ride by the river before dinner (of course he *would* go and look at boats), and had been talking of you. It was this day week, by-the-bye.

I know of nothing of public interest that is new in France, except that I am changing my moustache into a beard. We all send our most tender loves to dearest Miss Macready and all the house. The Hammy boy is particularly anxious to have his love sent to "Misr Creedy."

Ever, my dearest Macready,
Most affectionately yours.

Mr. W.
Wilkie
Collins.

VILLA DES MOULINEAUX, BOULOGNE, *Sunday, July 13th, 1856.*

MY DEAR COLLINS,

We are all sorry that you are not coming until the middle of next month, but we hope that you will then be able to remain, so that we may all come back together about the 10th of October. I think (recreation allowed, etc.), that the play will take that time to write. The ladies of the *dram. pers.* are frightfully anxious

to get it under way, and to see you locked up in the pavilion; apropos of which noble edifice I have omitted to mention that it is made a more secluded retreat than it used to be, and is greatly improved by the position of the door being changed. It is as snug and as pleasant as possible; and the Genius of Order has made a few little improvements about the house (at the rate of about tenpence apiece), which the Genius of Disorder will, it is hoped, appreciate.

I think I must come over for a small spree, and to fetch you. Suppose I were to come on the 9th or 10th of August to stay three or four days in town, would that do for you? Let me know at the end of this month.

I cannot tell you what a high opinion I have of Anne Rodway. I took "Extracts" out of the title because it conveyed to the many-headed an idea of incompleteness—of something unfinished—and is likely to stall some readers off. I read the first part at the office with strong admiration, and read the second on the railway coming back here, being in town just after you had started on your cruise. My behaviour before my fellow-passengers was weak in the extreme, for I cried as much as you could possibly desire. Apart from the genuine force and beauty of the little narrative, and the admirable personation of the girl's identity and point of view, it is done with an amount of honest pains and devotion to the work which few men have better reason to appreciate than I, and which no man can have a more profound respect for. I think it excellent, feel a personal pride and pleasure in it which is a delightful sensation, and know no one else who could have done it.

Of myself I have only to report that I have been hard at it with "Little Dorrit," and am now doing No. 10. This last week I sketched out the notion, characters, and progress of the farce, and sent it off to Mark, who has been ill of an ague. It ought to be very funny. The cat business is too ludicrous to be treated of in so small a sheet of paper, so I must describe it *vivâ voce* when I come to town. French has been so insufferably conceited since he shot tigerish cat No. 1 (intent on the noble Dick, with green eyes three inches in advance of her head), that I am afraid I shall have to part with him. All the boys likewise (in new clothes and ready for church) are at this instant prone on their stomachs behind bushes, whooshing and crying (after tigerish cat No. 2): "French!" "Here she comes!" "There she goes!" etc. I dare not put my head out of window for fear of being shot (it is as like a *coup d'état* as possible), and tradesmen coming up the avenue cry plaintively: "*Ne tirez pas, Monsieur Fleench; c'est moi—boulanger. Ne tirez pas, mon ami.*"

Likewise I shall have to recount to you the secret history of a robbery at the Pavilion at Folkestone, which you will have to write.

Tell Piggot, when you see him, that we shall all be much pleased if he will come at his own convenience while you are here, and stay a few days with us.

I shall have more than one notion of future work to suggest to you while we are beguiling the dreariness of an arctic winter in these parts. May they prosper!

Kind regards from all to the Dramatic Poet of

the establishment, and to the D. P.'s mother and brother.

Ever yours.

P.S.—If the “Flying Dutchman” should be done again, pray do go and see it. Webster expressed his opinion to me that it was “a neat piece.” I implore you to go and see a neat piece.

BOULOGNE, *Thursday, August 7th, 1856.* Mr. W. H. Wills.

MY DEAR WILLS,

I do not feel disposed to record those two Chancery cases; firstly, because I would rather have no part in engendering in the mind of any human creature, a hopeful confidence in that den of iniquity.

And secondly, because it seems to me that the real philosophy of the facts is altogether missed in the narrative. The wrong which chanced to be set right in these two cases was done, as all such wrong is, mainly because these wicked courts of equity, with all their means of evasion and postponement, give scoundrels confidence in cheating. If justice were cheap, sure, and speedy, few such things could be. It is because it has become (through the vile dealing of those courts and the vermin they have called into existence) a positive precept of experience that a man had better endure a great wrong than go, or suffer himself to be taken, into Chancery, with the dream of setting it right. It is because of this that such nefarious speculations are made.

Therefore I see nothing at all to the credit of Chancery in these cases, but everything to its dis-

credit. And as to owing it to Chancery to bear testimony to its having rendered justice in two such plain matters, I have no debt of the kind upon my conscience.

In haste, ever faithfully.

Mr. W. C.
Macready.

BOULOGNE, *Friday, August 8th, 1856.*

MY DEAREST MACREADY,

I like the second little poem very much indeed, and think (as you do) that it is a great advance upon the first. Please to note that I make it a rule to pay for everything that is inserted in "Household Words," holding it to be a part of my trust to make my fellow-proprietors understand that they have no right to unrequited labour. Therefore, when Wills (who has been ill and is gone for a holiday) does his invariable spiriting gently, don't make Katey's case different from Adelaide Procter's.

I am afraid there is no possibility of my reading Dorsetshirewards. I have made many conditional promises thus: "I am very much occupied; but if I read at all, I will read for your institution in such an order on my list." Edinburgh, which is No. 1, I have been obliged to put as far off as next Christmas twelvemonth. Bristol stands next. The working men at Preston come next. And so, if I were to go out of the record and read for your people, I should bring such a house about my ears as would shake "Little Dorrit" out of my head.

Being in town last Saturday, I went to see Robson in a burlesque of "Medea." It is an odd but perfectly true testimony to the extraordinary power of his performance (which is of a very remarkable kind

indeed), that it points the badness of ——'s acting in a most singular manner, by bringing out what she might do and does not. The scene with Jason is perfectly terrific; and the manner in which the comic rage and jealousy does not pitch itself over the floor at the stalls is in striking contrast to the manner in which the tragic rage and jealousy does. He has a frantic song and dagger dance, about ten minutes long altogether, which has more passion in it than —— could express in fifty years.

We all unite in kindest love to Miss Macready and all your dear ones; not forgetting my godson, to whom I send his godfather's particular love twice over. The Hammy boy is so brown that you would scarcely know him.

Ever, my dear Macready, affectionately yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Sunday Morning, Sept. 28th, 1856.* Mr. W. H. Wills.

MY DEAR WILLS,

I suddenly remember this morning that in Mr. Curtis's article, "Health and Education," I left a line which must come out. It is in effect that the want of healthy training leaves girls in a fit state to be the subjects of mesmerism. I would not on any condition hurt Elliotson's feelings (as I should deeply) by leaving that depreciatory kind of reference in any page of H. W. He has suffered quite enough without a stab from a friend. So pray, whatever the inconvenience may be in what Bradbury calls "the Friars," take that passage out. By some extraordinary accident, after observing it, I forgot to do it.

Ever faithfully.

Miss
Dickens.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Saturday, Oct. 4th, 1856.*

MY DEAR MAMEY,

The preparations for the play are already beginning, and it is christened (this is a great dramatic secret, which I suppose you know already) "The Frozen Deep."

Tell Katey, with my best love, that if she fail to come back six times as red, hungry, and strong as she was when she went away, I shall give her part to somebody else.

We shall all be very glad to see you both back again; when I say "we" I include the birds (who send their respectful duty) and the Plorn.

Kind regards to all at Brighton.

Ever, my dear Mamey, your affectionate Father.

The Hon.
Mrs.
Watson.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Tuesday, Oct. 7th, 1856.*

MY DEAR MRS. WATSON,

I *did* write it for you; and I hoped in writing it, that you would think so. All those remembrances are fresh in my mind, as they often are, and gave me an extraordinary interest in recalling the past. I should have been grievously disappointed if you had not been pleased, for I took aim at you with a most determined intention.

Let me congratulate you most heartily on your handsome Eddy having passed his examination with such credit. I am sure there is a spirit shining out of his eyes, which will do well in that manly and generous pursuit. You will naturally feel his departure very much, and so will he; but I have always observed within my experience, that the men who

have left home young have, many long years afterwards, had the tenderest love for it, and for all associated with it. That's a pleasant thing to think of, as one of the wise and benevolent adjustments in these lives of ours.

I have been so hard at work (and shall be for the next eight or nine months), that sometimes I fancy I have a digestion, or a head, or nerves, or some odd encumbrance of that kind, to which I am altogether unaccustomed, and am obliged to rush at some other object for relief; at present the house is in a state of tremendous excitement, on account of Mr. Collins having nearly finished the new play we are to act at Christmas, which is very interesting and extremely clever. I hope this time you will come and see it. We purpose producing it on Charley's birthday, Twelfth Night; but we shall probably play four nights altogether—"The Lighthouse" on the last occasion—so that if you could come for the two last nights, you would see both the pieces. I am going to try and do better than ever, and already the school-room is in the hands of carpenters; men from underground habitations in theatres, who look as if they lived entirely upon smoke and gas, meet me at unheard-of hours. Mr. Stanfield is perpetually measuring the boards with a chalked piece of string and an umbrella, and all the elder children are wildly punctual and business-like to attract managerial commendation. If you don't come, I shall do something antagonistic—try to unwrite No. 11, I think. I should particularly like you to see a new and serious piece so done. Because I don't think you know, without seeing, how good it is!!!

None of the children suffered, thank God, from the

Boulogne risk. The three little boys have gone back to school there, and are all well. Katey came away ill, but it turned out that she had the whooping-cough for the second time. She has been to Brighton, and comes home to-day. I hear great accounts of her, and hope to find her quite well when she arrives presently. I am afraid Mary Boyle has been praising the Boulogne life too highly. Not that I deny, however, our having passed some very pleasant days together, and our having had great pleasure in her visit.

You will object to me dreadfully, I know, with a beard (though not a great one); but if you come and see the play, you will find it necessary there, and will perhaps be more tolerant of the fearful object afterwards. I need not tell you how delighted we should be to see George, if you would come together. Pray tell him so, with my kind regards. I like the notion of Wentworth and his philosophy of all things. I remember a philosophical gravity upon him, a state of suspended opinion as to myself, it struck me, when we last met, in which I thought there was a great deal of oddity and character.

Charley is doing very well at Baring's, and attracting praise and reward to himself. Within this fortnight there turned up from the West Indies, where he is now a chief justice, an old friend of mine, of my own age, who lived with me in lodgings in the Adelphi, when I was just Charley's age. He had a great affection for me at that time, and always supposed I was to do some sort of wonders. It was a very pleasant meeting indeed, and he seemed to think it so odd that I shouldn't be Charley!

This is every atom of no-news that will come out

of my head, and I firmly believe it is all I have in it—except that a cobbler at Boulogne, who had the nicest of little dogs, that always sat in his sunny window watching him at work, asked me if I would bring the dog home, as he couldn't afford to pay the tax for him. The cobbler and the dog being both my particular friends, I complied. The cobbler parted with the dog heart-broken. When the dog got home here, my man, like an idiot as he is, tied him up and then untied him. The moment the gate was open, the dog (on the very day after his arrival) ran out. Next day, Georgy and I saw him lying, all covered with mud, dead, outside the neighbouring church. How am I ever to tell the cobbler? He is too poor to come to England, so I feel that I must lie to him for life, and say that the dog is fat and happy. Mr. Plornish, much affected by this tragedy, said: "I s'pose, pa, I shall meet the cobbler's dog" (in heaven).

Georgy and Catherine send their best love, and I send mine. Pray write to me again some day, and I can't be too busy to be happy in the sight of your familiar hand, associated in my mind with so much that I love and honour.

Ever, my dear Mrs. Watson, most faithfully yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, TAVISTOCK SQUARE, *Oct. 20th*, 1856.

Mrs.
Horne.

MY DEAR MRS. HORNE,

I answer your note by return of post, in order that you may know that the Stereoscopic Nottage has not written to me yet. Of course I will not lose a moment in replying to him when he does address me.

We shall be greatly pleased to see you again. You

have been very, very often in our thoughts and on our lips, during this long interval.

And "she" is near you, is she? O I remember her well! And I am still of my old opinion! Passionately devoted to her sex as I am (they are the weakness of my existence), I still consider her a failure. She had some extraordinary christian-name, which I forget. Lashed into verse by my feelings, I am inclined to write:

My heart disowns
Ophelia Jones!

only I think it was a more sounding name.

Are these the tones—
Volumnia Jones?

No. Again it seems doubtful.

God bless her bones,
Petronia Jones!

I think not.

Carve I on stones
Olympia Jones?

Can *that* be the name? Fond memory favours it more than any other. My love to her.

Ever, my dear Mrs. Horne, very faithfully yours.

The Duke
of Devon-
shire.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *December 1st*, 1856.

MY DEAR DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE,

The moment the first bill is printed for the first night of the new play I told you of, I send it to you, in the hope that you will grace it with your presence. There is not one of the old actors whom you will fail to inspire as no one else can; and I hope you will see a little result of a friendly union of the arts, that you

may think worth seeing, and that you can see nowhere else.

We propose repeating it on Thursday, the 8th; Monday, the 12th; and Wednesday, the 14th of January. I do not encumber this note with so many bills, and merely mention those nights in case any one of them should be more convenient to you than the first.

But I shall hope for the first, unless you dash me (N.B.—I put Flora into the current number on purpose that this might catch you softened towards me, and at a disadvantage). If there is hope of your coming, I will have the play clearly copied, and will send it to you to read beforehand. With the most grateful remembrances, and the sincerest good wishes for your health and happiness,

I am ever, my dear Duke of Devonshire,

Your faithful and obliged.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Wednesday, Dec. 3rd, 1856.*

Mr.
Thomas
Mitton.

MY DEAR MITTON,

The inspector from the fire office—surveyor, by-the-bye, they called him—duly came. Wills described him as not very pleasant in his manners. I derived the impression that he was so exceedingly dry, that if *he* ever takes fire, he must burn out, and can never otherwise be extinguished.

Next day, I received a letter from the secretary, to say that the said surveyor had reported great additional risk from fire, and that the directors, at their meeting next Tuesday, would settle the extra amount of premium to be paid.

Thereupon I thought the matter was becoming complicated, and wrote a common-sense note to the

secretary (which I begged might be read to the directors), saying that I was quite prepared to pay any extra premium, but setting forth the plain state of the case. (I did not say that the Lord Chief Justice, the Chief Baron, and half the Bench were coming; though I felt a temptation to make a joke about burning them all.)

Finally, this morning comes up the secretary to me (yesterday having been the great Tuesday), and says that he is requested by the directors to present their compliments, and to say that they could not think of charging for any additional risk at all; feeling convinced that I would place the gas (which they considered to be the only danger) under the charge of one competent man. I then explained to him how carefully and systematically that was all arranged, and we parted with drums beating and colours flying on both sides.

Ever faithfully.

Mr. W. C.
Macready.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Saturday Evening, Dec. 13th, 1856.*

MY DEAREST MACREADY,

We shall be charmed to squeeze Willie's friend in, and it shall be done by some undiscovered power of compression on the second night, Thursday, the 14th. Will you make our compliments to his honour, the Deputy Fiscal, present him with the enclosed bill, and tell him we shall be cordially glad to see him? I hope to entrust him with a special shake of the hand, to be forwarded to our dear boy (if a hoary sage like myself may venture on that expression) by the next mail.

I would have proposed the first night, but that is

too full. You may faintly imagine, my venerable friend, the occupation of these also gray hairs, between "Golden Marys," "Little Dorrits," "Household Wordses," four stage-carpenters entirely boarding on the premises, a carpenter's shop erected in the back garden, size always boiling over on all the lower fires, Stanfield perpetually elevated on planks and splashing himself from head to foot, Telbin requiring impossibilities of smart gasmen, and a legion of prowling nondescripts for ever shrinking in and out. Calm amidst the wreck, your aged friend glides away on the "Dorrit" stream, forgetting the uproar for a stretch of hours, refreshes himself with a ten or twelve miles walk, pitches headforemost into foaming rehearsals, placidly emerges for editorial purposes, smokes over buckets of distemper with Mr. Stanfield aforesaid, again calmly floats upon the "Dorrit" waters.

With very best love to Miss Macready and all the rest,

Ever, my dear Macready, most affectionately yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *December 15th*, 1856.

Miss
Power.

MY DEAR MARGUERITE,

I am not *quite* clear about the story; not because it is otherwise than exceedingly pretty, but because I am rather in a difficult position as to stories just now. Besides beginning a long one by Collins with the new year (which will last five or six months), I have, as I always have at this time, a considerable residue of stories written for the Christmas number, not suitable to it, and yet available for the general purposes of "Household Words." This limits my choice for the

moment to stories that have some decided specialties (or a great deal of story) in them.

But I will look over the accumulation before you come, and I hope you will never see your little friend again but in print.

You will find us expecting you on the night of the twenty-fourth, and heartily glad to welcome you. The most terrific preparations are in hand for the play on Twelfth Night. There has been a carpenter's shop in the garden for six weeks; a painter's shop in the school-room; a gasfitter's shop all over the basement; a dressmaker's shop at the top of the house; a tailor's shop in my dressing-room. Stanfield has been incessantly on scaffoldings for two months; and your friend has been writing "Little Dorrit," etc. etc., in corners, like the sultan's groom, who was turned upside-down by the genie.

Kindest love from all, and from me.

Ever affectionately.

Mr.
William
Charles
Kent.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Christmas Eve*, 1856.

MY DEAR SIR,

I cannot leave your letter unanswered, because I am really anxious that you should understand why I cannot comply with your request.

Scarcely a week passes without my receiving requests from various quarters to sit for likenesses, to be taken by all the processes ever invented. Apart from my having an invincible objection to the multiplication of my countenance in the shop-windows, I have not, between my avocations and my needful recreation, the time to comply with these proposals. At this moment there are three cases out of a vast number, in which I

have said: "If I sit at all, it shall be to you first, to you second, and to you third." But I assure you, I consider myself almost as unlikely to go through these three conditional achievements as I am to go to China. Judge when I am likely to get to Mr. Watkins!

I highly esteem and thank you for your sympathy with my writings. I doubt if I have a more genial reader in the world.

Very faithfully yours.

PROLOGUE TO "THE LIGHTHOUSE."

(Spoken by CHARLES DICKENS.)

Slow music all the time, unseen speaker, curtain down.

A story of those rocks where doomed ships come
To cast them wreck'd upon the steps of home,
Where solitary men, the long year through—
The wind their music and the brine their view—
Warn mariners to shun the beacon-light;
A story of those rocks is here to-night.
Eddystone lighthouse

[Exterior view discovered.]

In its ancient form;
Ere he who built it wish'd for the great storm
That shiver'd it to nothing; once again
Behold outgleaming on the angry main!
Within it are three men; to these repair
In our frail bark of Fancy, swift as air!
They are but shadows, as the rower grim
Took none but shadows in his boat with him.
So be ye shades, and, for a little space,
The real world a dream without a trace.
Return is easy. It will have ye back
Too soon to the old beaten dusty track;
For but one hour forget it. Billows rise,
Blow winds, fall rain, be black ye midnight skies;
And you who watch the light, arise! arise!

[Exterior view rises and discovers the scene.]

THE SONG OF THE WRECK.

I.

The wind blew high, the waters raved,
A ship drove on the land,
A hundred human creatures saved,
Kneeled down upon the sand.
Threescore were drowned, threescore were thrown
Upon the black rocks wild,
And thus among them, left alone,
They found one helpless child.

II.

A seaman rough, to shipwreck bred,
Stood out from all the rest,
And gently laid the lonely head
Upon his honest breast.
And travelling o'er the desert wide,
It was a solemn joy,
To see them, ever side by side,
The sailor and the boy.

III.

In famine, sickness, hunger, thirst,
The two were still but one,
Until the strong man drooped the first,
And felt his labours done.
Then to a trusty friend he spake,
"Across the desert wide,
O take this poor boy for my sake!"
And kissed the child and died.

IV.

Toiling along in weary plight,
Through heavy jungle, mire,
These two came later every night
To warm them at the fire.
Until the captain said one day,
"O seaman good and kind,
To save thyself now come away,
And leave the boy behind!"

V.

The child was slumb'ring near the blaze,
"O captain, let him rest
Until it sinks, when God's own ways
Shall teach us what is best!"

They watched the whitened ashy heap,
They touched the child in vain;
They did not leave him there asleep,
He never woke again.

This song was sung to the music of "Little Nell," a ballad composed by the late Mr. George Linley, to the words of Miss Charlotte Young, and dedicated to Charles Dickens. He was very fond of it, and his eldest daughter had been in the habit of singing it to him constantly since she was quite a child.

1857.

NARRATIVE.

THIS was a very full year in many ways. In February, Charles Dickens obtained possession of Gad's Hill, and was able to turn workmen into it. In April he stayed, with his wife and sister-in-law, for a week or two at Wate's Hotel, Gravesend, to be at hand to superintend the beginning of his alterations of the house, and from thence we give a letter to Lord Carlisle. He removed his family, for a summer residence in the house, in June; and he finished "Little Dorrit" there early in the summer. One of his first visitors at Gad's Hill was the famous writer, Hans Christian Andersen. In January "The Frozen Deep" had been played at the Tavistock House theatre with such great success, that it was necessary to repeat it several times, and the theatre was finally demolished at the end of that month. In June Charles Dickens heard, with great grief, of the death of his dear friend Douglas Jerrold; and as a testimony of admiration for his genius and affectionate regard for himself, it was

decided to organise, under the management of Charles Dickens, a series of entertainments, "in memory of the late Douglas Jerrold," the fund produced by them (a considerable sum) to be presented to Mr. Jerrold's family. The amateur company, including many of Mr. Jerrold's colleagues on "Punch," gave subscription performances of "The Frozen Deep;" the Gallery of Illustration, in Regent Street, being engaged for the purpose. Charles Dickens gave two readings at St. Martin's Hall of "The Christmas Carol" (to such immense audiences and with such success, that the idea of giving public readings for his *own* benefit first occurred to him at this time). The professional actors, among them the famous veteran actor, Mr. T. P. Cooke, gave a performance of Mr. Jerrold's plays of "The Rent Day" and "Blackeyed Susan," in which Mr. T. P. Cooke sustained the character in which he had originally made such great success when the play was written. A lecture was given by Mr. Thackeray, and another by Mr. W. H. Russell. Finally, the Queen having expressed a desire to see the play, which had been much talked of during that season, there was another performance before her Majesty and the Prince Consort at the Gallery of Illustration in July, and at the end of that month Charles Dickens read his "Carol" in the Free Trade Hall, at Manchester. And to wind up the "Memorial Fund" entertainments, "The Frozen Deep" was played again at Manchester, also in the great Free Trade Hall, at the end of August. For the business of these entertainments he secured the assistance of Mr. Arthur Smith, of whom he writes to Mr. Forster, at this time: "I have got hold of Arthur Smith, as the best man of business I know, and go to

work with him to-morrow morning." And when he began his own public readings, both in town and country, he felt himself most fortunate in having the co-operation of this invaluable man of business, and also of his zealous friendship and pleasant companionship.

In July, his second son, Walter Landor, went to India as a cadet in the "Company's service," from which he was afterwards transferred to the 42nd Royal Highlanders. His father and his elder brother went to see him off, to Southampton. From this place Charles Dickens writes to Mr. Edmund Yates, a young man in whom he had been interested from his boyhood, both for the sake of his parents and for his own sake, and for whom he had always an affectionate regard.

In September he made a short tour in the North of England, with Mr. Wilkie Collins, out of which arose the "Lazy Tour of Two Idle Apprentices," written by them jointly, and published in "Household Words." Some letters to his sister-in-law during this expedition are given here, parts of which (as is the case with many letters to his eldest daughter and his sister-in-law) have been published in Mr. Forster's book.

The letters which follow are almost all on the various subjects mentioned in our notes, and need little explanation.

His letter to Mr. Procter makes allusion to a legacy lately left to that friend.

The letters to Mr. Dilke, the original and much-respected editor of "The Athenæum," and to Mr. Forster, on the subject of the "Literary Fund," refer,

as the letters indicate, to a battle which they were carrying on together with that institution.

A letter to Mr. Frank Stone is an instance of his kind, patient, and judicious criticism of a young writer, and the letter which follows it shows how thoroughly it was understood and how perfectly appreciated by the authoress of the "Notes" referred to. Another instance of the same kind criticism is given in a second letter this year to Mr. Edmund Yates.

Mr. B. W.
Procter.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *January 2nd*, 1857.

MY DEAR PROCTER,

I have to thank you for a delightful book, which has given me unusual pleasure. My delight in it has been a little dashed by certain farewell verses, but I have made up my mind (and you have no idea of the obstinacy of my character) not to believe them.

Perhaps it is not taking a liberty—perhaps it is—to congratulate you on Kenyon's remembrance. Either way I can't help doing it with all my heart, for I know no man in the world (myself excepted) to whom I would rather the money went.

Affectionately yours ever.

Sir James
Emerson
Tennent.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *January 9th*, 1857.

MY DEAR TENNENT,

I must thank you for your earnest and affectionate letter. It has given me the greatest pleasure, mixing the play in my mind confusedly and delightfully with Pisa, the Valetta, Naples, Herculaneum—God knows what not.

As to the play itself; when it is made as good as my care can make it, I derive a strange feeling out of

it, like writing a book in company; a satisfaction of a most singular kind, which has no exact parallel in my life; a something that I suppose to belong to the life of a labourer in art alone, and which has to me a conviction of its being actual truth without its pain, that I never could adequately state if I were to try never so hard.

You touch so kindly and feelingly on the pleasure such little pains give, that I feel quite sorry you have never seen this drama in progress during the last ten weeks here. Every Monday and Friday evening during that time we have been at work upon it. I assure you it has been a remarkable lesson to my young people in patience, perseverance, punctuality, and order; and, best of all, in that kind of humility which is got from the earned knowledge that whatever the right hand finds to do must be done with the heart in it, and in a desperate earnest.

When I changed my dress last night (though I did it very quickly), I was vexed to find you gone. I wanted to have secured you for our green-room supper, which was very pleasant. If by any accident you should be free next Wednesday night (our last), pray come to that green-room supper. It would give me cordial pleasure to have you there.

Ever, my dear Tennent, very heartily yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Monday Night, Jan. 17th, 1857.*

M. de
Cerjat.

MY DEAR CERJAT,

So wonderfully do good (epistolary) intentions become confounded with bad execution, that I assure you I laboured under a perfect and most comfortable conviction that I had answered your Christmas Eve

letter of 1855. More than that, in spite of your assertions to the contrary, I still strenuously believe that I did so! I have more than half a mind ("Little Dorrit" and my other occupations notwithstanding) to charge you with having forgotten my reply!! I have even a wild idea that Townshend reproached me, when the last old year was new, with writing to you instead of to him!!! We will argue it out, as well as we can argue anything without poor dear Haldimand, when I come back to Elysée. In any case, however, don't discontinue your annual letter, because it has become an expected and a delightful part of the season to me.

With one of the prettiest houses in London, and every conceivable (and inconceivable) luxury in it, Townshend is voluntarily undergoing his own sentence of transportation in Nervi, a beastly little place near Genoa, where you would as soon find a herd of wild elephants in any villa as comfort. He has a notion that he *must* be out of England in the winter, but I believe him to be altogether wrong (as I have just told him in a letter), unless he could just take his society with him.

Workmen are now battering and smashing down my theatre here, where we have just been acting a new play of great merit, done in what I may call (modestly speaking of the getting-up, and not of the acting) an unprecedented way. I believe that anything so complete has never been seen. We had an act at the North Pole, where the slightest and greatest thing the eye beheld were equally taken from the books of the Polar voyagers. Out of thirty people, there were certainly not two who might not have gone straight to

the North Pole itself, completely furnished for the winter! It has been the talk of all London for these three weeks. And now it is a mere chaos of scaffolding, ladders, beams, canvases, paint-pots, sawdust, artificial snow, gas-pipes, and ghastliness. I have taken such pains with it for these ten weeks in all my leisure hours, that I feel now shipwrecked—as if I had never been without a play on my hands before. A third topic comes up as this ceases.

Down at Gad's Hill, near Rochester, in Kent—Shakespeare's Gad's Hill, where Falstaff engaged in the robbery—is a quaint little country-house of Queen Anne's time. I happened to be walking past, a year and a half or so ago, with my sub-editor of "Household Words," when I said to him: "You see that house? It has always a curious interest for me, because when I was a small boy down in these parts I thought it the most beautiful house (I suppose because of its famous old cedar-trees) ever seen. And my poor father used to bring me to look at it, and used to say that if I ever grew up to be a clever man perhaps I might own that house, or such another house. In remembrance of which, I have always in passing looked to see if it was to be sold or let, and it has never been to me like any other house, and it has never changed at all." We came back to town, and my friend went out to dinner. Next morning he came to me in great excitement, and said: "It is written that you were to have that house at Gad's Hill. The lady I had allotted to me to take down to dinner yesterday began to speak of that neighbourhood. 'You know it?' I said; 'I have been there to-day.' 'O yes,' said she, 'I know it very well. I was

a child there, in the house they call Gad's Hill Place. My father was the rector, and lived there many years. He has just died, has left it to me, and I want to sell it.' 'So,' says the sub-editor, 'you must buy it. Now or never!'" I did, and hope to pass next summer there, though I may, perhaps, let it afterwards, furnished, from time to time.

All about myself I find, and the little sheet nearly full! But I know, my dear Cerjat, the subject will have its interest for you, so I give it its swing. Mrs. Watson was to have been at the play, but most unfortunately had three children sick of gastric fever, and could not leave them. She was here some three weeks before, looking extremely well in the face, but rather thin. I have not heard of your friend Mr. Percival Skelton, but I much misdoubt an amateur artist's success in this vast place. I hope you detected a remembrance of our happy visit to the Great St. Bernard in a certain number of "Little Dorrit"? Tell Mrs. Cerjat, with my love, that the opinions I have expressed to her on the subject of cows have become matured in my mind by experience and venerable age; and that I denounce the race as humbugs, who have been getting into poetry and all sorts of places without the smallest reason. Haldimand's housekeeper is an awful woman to consider. Pray give him our kindest regards and remembrances, if you ever find him in a mood to take it. "Our" means Mrs. Dickens's, Georgie's, and mine. We often, often talk of our old days at Lausanne, and send loving regard to Mrs. Cerjat and all your house.

Adieu, my dear fellow; ever cordially yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *January 28th*, 1857. Mr. W. C. Macready.

MY DEAREST MACREADY,

Your friend and servant is as calm as Pecksniff, saving for his knitted brows now turning into cordage over Little Dorrit. The theatre has disappeared, the house is restored to its usual conditions of order, the family are tranquil and domestic, dove-eyed peace is enthroned in this study, fire-eyed radicalism in its master's breast.

I am glad to hear that our poetess is at work again, and shall be very much pleased to have some more contributions from her.

Love from all to your dear sister, and to Katie, and to all the house.

We dined yesterday at Frederick Pollock's. I begged an amazing photograph of you, and brought it away. It strikes me as one of the most ludicrous things I ever saw in my life. I think of taking a public-house, and having it copied larger, for the size. You may remember it? Very square and big—the Saracen's Head with its hair cut, and in modern gear? Staring very hard? As your particular friend, I would not part with it on any consideration. I will never get such a wooden head again.

Ever affectionately.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *February 7th*, 1857. Miss Mary Boyle.

MY DEAR MARY,

Half-a-dozen words on this, my birthday, to thank you for your kind and welcome remembrance, and to assure you that your Joseph is proud of it.

For about ten minutes after his death, on each

occasion of that event occurring, Richard Wardour was in a floored condition. And one night, to the great terror of Devonshire, the Arctic Regions, and Newfoundland (all of which localities were afraid to speak to him, as his ghost sat by the kitchen fire in its rags), he very nearly did what he never did, went and fainted off, dead, again. But he always plucked up, on the turn of ten minutes, and became facetious.

Likewise he chipped great pieces out of all his limbs (solely, as I imagine, from moral earnestness and concussion of passion, for I never knew him to hit himself in any way) and terrified Aldersley* to that degree, by lunging at him to carry him into the cave, that the said Aldersley always shook like a mould of jelly, and muttered, "By G——, this is an awful thing!"

Ever affectionately.

P.S.—I shall never cease to regret Mrs. Watson's not having been there.

Rev.
James
White.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Sunday, Feb. 8th, 1857.*

MY DEAR WHITE,

I send these lines by Mary and Katey, to report my love to all.

Your note about the *Golden Mary* gave me great pleasure; though I don't believe in one part of it; for I honestly believe that your story, as really belonging to the rest of the narrative, had been generally separated from the other stories, and greatly liked. I had not that particular shipwreck that you mention in my mind (indeed I doubt if I know it), and John Steadiman merely came into my head as a staunch sort of

* The part played in "The Frozen Deep" by its author, Mr. Wilkie Collins.

name that suited the character. The number has done "Household Words" great service, and has decidedly told upon its circulation.

You should have come to the play. I much doubt if anything so complete will ever be seen again. An incredible amount of pains and ingenuity was expended on it, and the result was most remarkable even to me.

When are you going to send something more to H. W.? Are you lazy?? Low-spirited??? Pining for Paris????

Ever affectionately.

OFFICE OF "HOUSEHOLD WORDS," *Thursday, March 19th, 1857.* Mr. C. W. Dilke.

MY DEAR MR. DILKE,

Forster has another notion about the Literary Fund. Will you name a day next week—that day being neither Thursday nor Saturday—when we shall hold solemn council there at half-past four?

For myself, I beg to report that I have my war-paint on, that I have buried the pipe of peace, and am whooping for committee scalps.

Ever faithfully yours.

GRAVESEND, KENT, *Wednesday, April 15th, 1857.* The Earl of Carlisle.

MY DEAR LORD CARLISLE,

I am writing by the river-side for a few days, and at the end of last week —— appeared here with your note of introduction. I was not in the way; but as —— had come express from London with it, Mrs. Dickens opened it, and gave her (in the limited sense which was of no use to her) an audience. She did not quite seem to know what she wanted of me. But she said she had understood at Stafford House that I

had a theatre in which she could read; with a good deal of modesty and diffidence she at last got so far. Now, my little theatre turns my house out of window, costs fifty pounds to put up, and is only two months taken down; therefore, is quite out of the question. This Mrs. Dickens explained, and also my profound inability to do anything for —— readings which they could not do for themselves. She appeared fully to understand the explanation, and indeed to have anticipated for herself how powerless I must be in such a case.

She described herself as being consumptive, and as being subject to an effusion of blood from the lungs; about the last condition, one would think, poor woman, for the exercise of public elocution as an art.

Between ourselves, I think the whole idea a mistake, and have thought so from its first announcement. It has a fatal appearance of trading upon Uncle Tom, and am I not a man and a brother? which you may be by all means, and still not have the smallest claim to my attention as a public reader. The town is over-read from all the white squares on the draught-board; it has been considerably harried from all the black squares—now with the aid of old banjoes, and now with the aid of Exeter Hall; and I have a very strong impression that it is by no means to be laid hold of from this point of address. I myself, for example, am the meekest of men, and in abhorrence of slavery yield to no human creature, and yet I don't admit the sequence that I want Uncle Tom (or Aunt Tomasina) to expound "King Lear" to me. And I believe my case to be the case of thousands.

I trouble you with this much about it, because I

am naturally desirous you should understand that if I could possibly have been of any service, or have suggested anything to this poor lady, I would not have lost the opportunity. But I cannot help her, and I assure you that I cannot honestly encourage her to hope. I fear her enterprise has no hope in it.

In your absence I have always followed you through the papers, and felt a personal interest and pleasure in the public affection in which you are held over there.* At the same time I must confess that I should prefer to have you here, where good public men seem to me to be dismally wanted. I have no sympathy with demagogues, but am a grievous Radical, and think the political signs of the times to be just about as bad as the spirit of the people will admit of their being. In all other respects I am as healthy, sound, and happy as your kindness can wish. So you will set down my political despondency as my only disease.

On the tip-top of Gad's Hill, between this and Rochester, on the very spot where Falstaff ran away, I have a pretty little old-fashioned house, which I shall live in the hope of showing to you one day. Also I have a little story respecting the manner in which it became mine, which I hope (on the same occasion in the clouds) to tell you. Until then and always, I am, dear Lord Carlisle,

Yours very faithfully and obliged.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *May 13th*, 1857. Mr. John Forster.

MY DEAR FORSTER,

I have gone over Dilke's memoranda, and I think it quite right and necessary that those points should

* The Earl of Carlisle was at this time Viceroy of Ireland.

be stated. Nor do I see the least difficulty in the way of their introduction into the pamphlet. But I do not deem it possible to get the pamphlet written and published before the dinner. I have so many matters pressing on my attention, that I cannot turn to it immediately on my release from my book just finished. It shall be done and distributed early next month.

As to anything being lost by its not being in the hands of the people who dine (as you seem to think), I have not the least misgiving on that score. They would say, if it were issued, just what they will say without it.

Lord Granville is committed to taking the chair, and will make the best speech he can in it. The pious —— will cram him with as many distortions of the truth as his stomach may be strong enough to receive. ——, with Bardolphian eloquence, will cool his nose in the modest merits of the institution. —— will make a neat and appropriate speech on both sides, round the corner and over the way. And all this would be done exactly to the same purpose and in just the same strain, if twenty thousand copies of the pamphlet had been circulated.

Ever affectionately.

Rev.
James
White.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Friday, May 22nd, 1857.*

MY DEAR WHITE,

My emancipation having been effected on Saturday, the ninth of this month, I take some shame to myself for not having sooner answered your note. But the host of things to be done as soon as I was free, and the tremendous number of ingenuities to be wrought

out at Gad's Hill, have kept me in a whirl of their own ever since.

We purpose going to Gad's Hill for the summer on the 1st of June; as, apart from the master's eye being a necessary ornament to the spot, I clearly see that the workmen yet lingering in the yard must be squeezed out by bodily pressure, or they will never go. How will this suit you and yours? If you will come down, we can take you all in, on your way north; that is to say, we shall have that ample verge and room enough, until about the eighth; when Hans Christian Andersen (who has been "coming" for about three years) will come for a fortnight's stay in England. I shall like you to see the little old-fashioned place. It strikes me as being comfortable.

So let me know your little game. And with love to Mrs. White, Lotty, and Clara,

Believe me, ever affectionately yours.

OFFICE OF "HOUSEHOLD WORDS," *Monday, June 1st, 1857.*

Mr. Frank
Stone,
A.R.A.

MY DEAR STONE,

I know that what I am going to say will not be agreeable; but I rely on the authoress's good sense; and say it, knowing it to be the truth.

These "Notes" are destroyed by too much smartness. It gives the appearance of perpetual effort, stabs to the heart the nature that is in them, and wearies by the manner and not by the matter. It is the commonest fault in the world (as I have constant occasion to observe here), but it is a very great one. Just as you couldn't bear to have an *épergne* or a candlestick on your table, supported by a light figure always on tiptoe and evidently in an impossible attitude for the

sustainment of its weight, so all readers would be more or less oppressed and worried by this presentation of everything in one smart point of view, when they know it must have other, and weightier, and more solid properties. Airiness and good spirits are always delightful, and are inseparable from notes of a cheerful trip; but they should sympathise with many things as well as see them in a lively way. It is but a word or a touch that expresses this humanity, but without that little embellishment of good nature there is no such thing as humour. In this little MS. everything is too much patronised and condescended to, whereas the slightest touch of feeling for the rustic who is of the earth earthy, or of sisterhood with the homely servant who has made her face shine in her desire to please, would make a difference that the writer can scarcely imagine without trying it. The only relief in the twentyone slips is the little bit about the chimes. It is a relief, simply because it is an indication of some kind of sentiment. You don't want any sentiment laboriously made out in such a thing. You don't want any maudlin show of it. But you do want a pervading suggestion that it is there. It makes all the difference between being playful and being cruel. Again I must say, above all things—especially to young people writing: For the love of God don't condescend! Don't assume the attitude of saying, "See how clever I am, and what fun everybody else is!" Take any shape but that.

I observe an excellent quality of observation throughout, and think the boy at the shop, and all about him, particularly good. I have no doubt whatever that the rest of the journal will be much better if the writer

chooses to make it so. If she considers for a moment within herself, she will know that she derived pleasure from everything she saw, because she saw it with innumerable lights and shades upon it, and bound to humanity by innumerable fine links; she cannot possibly communicate anything of that pleasure to another by showing it from one little limited point only, and that point, observe, the one from which it is impossible to detach the exponent as the patroness of a whole universe of inferior souls. This is what everybody would mean in objecting to these notes (supposing them to be published), that they are too smart and too flippant.

As I understand this matter to be altogether between us three, and as I think your confidence, and her's, imposes a duty of friendship on me, I discharge it to the best of my ability. Perhaps I make more of it than you may have meant or expected; if so, it is because I am interested and wish to express it. If there had been anything in my objection not perfectly easy of removal, I might, after all, have hesitated to state it; but that is not the case. A very little indeed would make all this gaiety as sound and wholesome and good-natured in the reader's mind as it is in the writer's.

Affectionately always.

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM, *Thursday, June 4th, 1857.*

Anonym-
ous.

MY DEAR——

Coming home here last night, from a day's business in London, I found your most excellent note awaiting me, in which I have had a pleasure to be derived from none but good and natural things. I can now honestly

assure you that I believe you will write *well*, and that I have a lively hope that I may be the means of showing you yourself in print one day. Your powers of graceful and light-hearted observation need nothing but the little touches on which we are both agreed. And I am perfectly sure that they will be as pleasant to you as to anyone, for nobody can see so well as you do, without feeling kindly too.

To confess the truth to you, I was half sorry, yesterday, that I had been so unreserved; but not half as sorry, yesterday, as I am glad to-day. You must not mind my adding that there is a noble candour and modesty in your note, which I shall never be able to separate from you henceforth.

Affectionately yours always.

Mr. Henry
Austin.

GAD'S HILL, *Saturday, June 6th, 1857.*

MY DEAR HENRY,

Here is a very serious business on the great estate respecting the water supply. Last night, they had pumped the well dry merely in raising the family supply for the day; and this morning (very little water having been got into the cisterns) it is dry again! It is pretty clear to me that we must look the thing in the face, and at once bore deeper, dig, or do some beastly thing or other, to secure this necessary in abundance. Meanwhile I am in a most plaintive and forlorn condition without your presence and counsel. I raise my voice in the wilderness and implore the same!!!

Wild legends are in circulation among the servants how that Captain Goldsmith on the knoll above—the skipper in that crow's-nest of a house—has millions of

gallons of water always flowing for him. Can he have damaged my well? Can we imitate him, and have our millions of gallons? Goldsmith or I must fall, so I conceive.

If you get this, send me a telegraph message informing me when I may expect comfort. I am held by four of the family while I write this, in case I should do myself a mischief—it certainly won't be taking to drinking water.

Ever affectionately (most despairingly).

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Monday, July 13th, 1857.* Mr. W. C.
Macready.

MY DEAREST MACREADY,

Many thanks for your Indian information. I shall act upon it in the most exact manner. Walter sails next Monday. Charley and I go down with him to Southampton next Sunday. We are all delighted with the prospect of seeing you at Gad's Hill. These are my Jerrold engagements: On Friday, the 24th, I have to repeat my reading at St. Martin's Hall; on Saturday, the 25th, to repeat "The Frozen Deep" at the Gallery of Illustration for the last time. On Thursday, the 30th, or Friday, the 31st, I shall probably read at Manchester. Deane, the general manager of the Exhibition, is going down to-night, and will arrange all the preliminaries for me. If you and I went down to Manchester together, and were there on a Sunday, he would give us the whole Exhibition to ourselves. It is probable, I think (as he estimates the receipts of a night at about seven hundred pounds), that we may, in about a fortnight or so after the reading, play "The Frozen Deep" at Manchester. But of this contingent engagement I at present know no more than you do.

Now, will you, upon this exposition of affairs, choose your own time for coming to us, and, when you have made your choice, write to me at Gad's Hill? I am going down this afternoon for rest (which means violent cricket with the boys) after last Saturday night; which was a teaser, but triumphant. The St. Martin's Hall audience was, I must confess, a very extraordinary thing. The two thousand and odd people were like one, and their enthusiasm was something awful.

Yet I have seen that before, too. Your young remembrance cannot recall the man; but he flourished in my day—a great actor, sir—a noble actor—thorough artist! I have seen him do wonders in that way. He retired from the stage early in life (having a monomaniacal delusion that he was old), and is said to be still living in your county.

All join in kindest love to your dear sister and all the rest.

Ever, my dearest Macready,
Most affectionately yours.

Mr.
Edmund
Yates.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Sunday, July 19th, 1857.*

MY DEAR YATES,

Although I date this ashore, I really write it from Southampton (don't notice this fact in your reply, for I shall be in town on Wednesday). I have come here on an errand which will grow familiar to you before you know that Time has flapped his wings over your head. Like me, you will find those babies grow to be young men before you are quite sure they are born. Like me, you will have great teeth drawn with a wrench, and will only then know that you ever cut

them. I am here to send Walter away over what they call, in Green Bush melodramas, "the Big Drink," and I don't at all know this day how he comes to be mine, or I his.

I don't write to say this—or to say how seeing Charley, and he going aboard the ship before me just now, I suddenly came into possession of a photograph of my own back at sixteen and twenty, and also into a suspicion that I had doubled the last age. I merely write to mention that Telbin and his wife are going down to Gad's Hill with us, about mid-day next Sunday, and that if you, and Mrs. Yates will come too, we shall be delighted to have you. We can give you a bed, and you can be in town (if you have such a savage necessity) by twenty minutes before ten on Monday morning.

I was very much pleased (as I had reason to be) with your account of the reading in *The Daily News*. I thank you heartily.

IN REMEMBRANCE OF THE LATE MR. DOUGLAS JERROLD. Mr. T. P. Cooke.

COMMITTEE'S OFFICE, GALLERY OF ILLUSTRATION,
REGENT STREET, *Thursday, July 30th, 1857.*

MY DEAR MR. COOKE,

I cannot rest satisfied this morning without writing to congratulate you on your admirable performance of last night. It was so fresh and vigorous, so manly and gallant, that I felt as if it splashed against my theatre-heated face, along with the spray of the breezy sea. What I felt everybody felt; I should feel it quite an impertinence to take myself out of the crowd, therefore, if I could by any means help doing so. But I

can't; so I hope you will feel that you bring me on yourself, and have only yourself to blame.

Always faithfully yours.

Mrs.
Compton.

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER,

Sunday Night, Aug. 2nd, 1857.

MY DEAR MRS. COMPTON,

We are going to play "The Frozen Deep" (pursuant to requisition from town magnates, etc.) at Manchester, at the New Free Trade Hall, on the nights of Friday and Saturday, the 21st and 22nd August.

The place is out of the question for my girls. Their action could not be seen, and their voices could not be heard. You and I have played, there and elsewhere, so sociably and happily, that I am emboldened to ask you whether you would play my sister-in-law Georgina's part (Compton and babies permitting).

We shall go down in the old pleasant way, and shall have the Art Treasures Exhibition to ourselves on the Sunday; when even "he" (as Rogers always called every pretty woman's husband) might come and join us.

What do you say? What does he say? and what does baby say? When I use the term "baby," I use it in two tenses—present and future.

Answer me at this address, like the Juliet I saw at Drury Lane—when was it?—yesterday. And whatever your answer is, if you will say that you and Compton will meet us at the North Kent Station, London Bridge, next Sunday at a quarter before one, and will come down here for a breath of sweet air and stay all night, you will give your friends great pleasure. Not least among them,

Yours faithfully.

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER,

Monday, Aug. 3rd, 1857.

Mr. W. C.
Macready.

MY DEAREST MACREADY,

I write to you in reference to your last note, as soon as I positively know our final movements in the Jerrold matter.

We are going to wind up by acting at Manchester (on solemn requisition) on the evenings of Friday and Saturday, the 21st and 22nd (actresses substituted for the girls, of course). We shall have to leave here on the morning of the 20th. You thought of coming on the 16th; can't you make it a day or two earlier, so as to be with us a whole week? Decide and pronounce. Again, cannot you bring Katey with you? Decide and pronounce thereupon, also.

I read at Manchester last Friday. As many thousand people were there as you like to name. The collection of pictures in the Exhibition is wonderful. And the power with which the modern English school asserts itself is a very gratifying and delightful thing to behold. The care for the common people, in the provision made for their comfort and refreshment, is also admirable and worthy of all commendation. But they want more amusement, and particularly (as it strikes me) *something in motion*, though it were only a twisting fountain. The thing is too still after their lives of machinery, and art flies over their heads in consequence.

I hope you have seen my tussle with the "Edinburgh." I saw the chance last Friday week, as I was going down to read the "Carol" in St. Martin's Hall. Instantly turned to, then and there, and wrote half the article. Flew out of bed early next morning, and finished

it by noon. Went down to Gallery of Illustration (we acted that night), did the day's business, corrected the proofs in Polar costume in dressing-room, broke up two numbers of "Household Words" to get it out directly, played in "Frozen Deep" and "Uncle John," presided at supper of company, made no end of speeches, went home and gave in completely for four hours, then got sound asleep, and next day was as fresh as you used to be in the far-off days of your lusty youth.

All here send kindest love to your dear good sister and all the house.

Ever and ever affectionately.

Mr. Frank
Stone.
A.R.A.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Sunday Afternoon, Aug. 9th, 1857.*

MY DEAR STONE,

Now here, without any preface, is a good, confounding, stunning question for you—would you like to play "Uncle John" on the two nights at Manchester?

It is not a long part. You could have a full rehearsal on the Friday, and I could sit in the wing at night and pull you through all the business. Perhaps you might not object to being in the thing in your own native place, and the relief to me would be enormous.

This is what has come into my head lying in bed to-day (I have been in bed all day), and this is just my plain reason for writing to you.

It's a capital part, and you are a capital old man. You know the play as we play it, and the Manchester people don't. Say the word, and I'll send you my own book by return of post.

The agitation and exertion of Richard Wardour are

so great to me, that I cannot rally my spirits in the short space of time I get. The strain is so great to make a show of doing it, that I want to be helped out of "Uncle John" if I can. Think of yourself far more than me; but if you half think you are up to the joke, and half doubt your being so, then give me the benefit of the doubt and play the part.

Answer me at Gad's Hill.

Ever affectionately.

P.S.—If you play, I shall immediately announce it to all concerned. If you don't, I shall go on as if nothing had happened, and shall say nothing to anyone.

GAD'S HILL PLACE, *Saturday, Aug. 15th, 1857.* Mr. Henry Austin.

MY DEAR HENRY,

At last, I am happy to inform you, we have got at a famous spring!! It rushed in this morning, ten foot deep. And our friends talk of its supplying "a ton a minute for yourself and your family, sir, for evermore."

They ask leave to bore ten feet lower, to prevent the possibility of what they call "a choking with surlage." Likewise, they are going to insert "a rose-headed pipe;" at the mention of which implement, I am (secretly) well-nigh distracted, having no idea of what it means. But I have said "Yes," besides instantly standing a bottle of gin. Can you come back, and can you get down on Monday morning, to advise and endeavour to decide on the mechanical force we shall use for raising the water? I would return with you, as I shall have to be in town until Thursday, and

then to go to Manchester until the following Tuesday.

I send this by hand to John, to bring to you.

Ever affectionately.

Mr. Frank
Stone,
A.R.A.

GAD'S HILL PLACE, *Monday, Aug. 17th, 1857.*

MY DEAR STONE,

I received your kind note this morning, and write this reply here to take to London with me and post in town, being bound for that village and three days' drill of the professional ladies who are to succeed the Tavistock girls.

My book I enclose. There is a slight alteration (which does not affect you) at the end of the first act, in order that the piece may be played through without having the drop curtain down. You will not find the situations or business difficult, with me on the spot to put you right.

Now, as to the dress. You will want a pair of pumps, and a pair of white silk socks; these you can get at Manchester. The extravagantly and anciently-frilled shirts that I have had got up for the part, I will bring you down; large white waistcoat, I will bring you down; large white hat, I will bring you down; dressing-gown, I will bring you down; white gloves and ditto choker you can get at Manchester. There then remain only a pair of common nankeen tights, to button below the calf, and blue wedding-coat. The nankeen tights you had best get made at once; my "Uncle John" coat I will send you down in a parcel by tomorrow's train, to have altered in Manchester to your shape and figure. You will then be quite independent of Christian chance and Jewish Nathan, which latter

potentate is now at Canterbury with the cricket amateurs, and might fail.

A Thursday's rehearsal is (unfortunately) now impracticable, the passes for the railway being all made out, and the company's sailing orders issued. But, as I have already suggested, with a careful rehearsal on Friday morning, and with me at the wing at night to put you right, you will find yourself sliding through it easily. There is nothing in the least complicated in the business. As to the dance, you have only to knock yourself up for a twelve-month and it will go nobly.

After all, too, if you *should*, through any unlucky break-down, come to be afraid of it, I am no worse off than I was before, if I have to do it at last. Keep your pecker up with that.

I am heartily obliged to you, my dear old boy, for your affectionate and considerate note, and I wouldn't have you do it, really and sincerely—immense as the relief will be to me—unless you are quite comfortable in it, and able to enjoy it.

Ever affectionately.

OFFICE OF "HOUSEHOLD WORDS," *Tuesday, Aug. 18th, 1857.*

Mr. Frank
Stone,
A.R.A.

MY DEAR STONE,

I sent you a telegraph message last night, in total contradiction of the letter you received from me this morning.

The reason was simply this: Arthur Smith and the other business men, both in Manchester and here, urged upon me, in the strongest manner, that they were afraid of the change; that it was well known in Manchester that I had done the part in London; that

there was a danger of its being considered disrespectful in me to give it up; also that there was a danger that it might be thought that I did so at the last minute, after an immense let, whereas I might have done it at first, etc. etc. etc. Having no desire but for the success of our object, and a becoming recognition on my part of the kind Manchester public's cordiality, I gave way, and thought it best to go on.

I do so against the grain, and against every inclination, and against the strongest feeling of gratitude to you. My people at home will be miserable too when they hear I am going to do it. If I could have heard from you sooner, and got the bill out sooner, I should have been firmer in considering my own necessity of relief. As it is, I sneak under; and I hope you will feel the reasons, and approve.

Ever affectionately.

Mr. Henry
Austin.

GAD'S HILL PLACE, *Wednesday, Sept. 2nd, 1857.*

MY DEAR HENRY,

The second conspirator has been here this morning to ask whether you wish the windlass to be left in the yard, and whether you will want him and his mate any more, and, if so, when? Of course he says (rolling something in the form of a fillet in at one broken tooth all the while, and rolling it out at another) that they could wish fur to have the windlass if it warn't any ways a hill convenience fur to fetch her away. I have told him that if he will come back on Friday he shall have your reply. Will you, therefore, send it me by return of post? He says he'll "look up" (as if he was an astronomer) "a Friday arterdinner."

On Monday I am going away with Collins for ten

days or a fortnight, on a "tour in search of an article" for "Household Words." We have not the least idea where we are going; but *he* says, "Let's look at the Norfolk coast," and *I* say, "Let's look at the back of the Atlantic." I don't quite know what I mean by that; but have a general impression that I mean something knowing.

I am horribly used up after the Jerrold business. Low spirits, low pulse, low voice, intense reaction. If I were not like Mr. Micawber, "falling back for a spring" on Monday, I think I should slink into a corner and cry.

Ever affectionately.

ALLONBY, CUMBERLAND, *Wednesday Night, Sept. 9th, 1857.* Miss Hogarth.

MY DEAR GEORGY,

* * * * *

Think of Collins's usual luck with me! We went up a Cumberland mountain yesterday—a huge black hill, fifteen hundred feet high. We took for a guide a capital innkeeper hard by. It rained in torrents—as it only does rain in a hill country—the whole time. At the top, there were black mists and the darkness of night. It then came out that the innkeeper had not been up for twenty years, and he lost his head and himself altogether; and we couldn't get down again! What wonders the Inimitable performed with his compass until it broke with the heat and wet of his pocket no matter; it did break, and then we wandered about, until it was clear to the Inimitable that the night must be passed there, and the enterprising travellers probably die of cold. We took our own way about coming down, struck, and declared that the guide might

wander where he would, but we would follow a water-course we lighted upon, and which must come at last to the river. This necessitated amazing gymnastics; in the course of which performances, Collins fell into the said watercourse with his ankle sprained, and the great ligament of the foot and leg swollen I don't know how big.

How I enacted Wardour over again in carrying him down, and what a business it was to get him down; I may say in Gibbs's words: "*Vi lascio a giudicare!*" But he was got down somehow, and we got off the mountain somehow; and now I carry him to bed, and into and out of carriages, exactly like Wardour in private life. I don't believe he will stand for a month to come. He has had a doctor, and can wear neither shoe nor stocking, and has his foot wrapped up in a flannel waistcoat, and has a breakfast saucer of liniment, and a horrible dabbling of lotion incessantly in progress. We laugh at it all, but I doubt very much whether he can go on to Doncaster. It will be a miserable blow to our H. W. scheme, and I say nothing about it as yet; but he is really so crippled that I doubt the getting him there. We have resolved to fall to work to-morrow morning and begin our writing; and there, for the present, that point rests.

This is a little place with fifty houses, five bathing-machines, five girls in straw hats, five men in straw hats, and no other company. The little houses are all in half-mourning—yellow stone on white stone, and black; and it reminds me of what Broadstairs might have been if it had not inherited a cliff, and had been an Irishman. But this is a capital little homely inn, looking out upon the sea; and we are really very com-

fortably lodged. I can just stand upright in my bedroom. Otherwise, it is a good deal like one of Ballard's top-rooms. We have a very obliging and comfortable landlady; and it is a clean nice place in a rough wild country. We came here haphazard, but could not have done better.

We lay last night at a place called Wigton—also in half-mourning—with the wonderful peculiarity that it had no population, no business, no streets to speak of; but five linendrapers within range of our small windows, one linendraper's next door, and five more linendrapers round the corner. I ordered a night-light in my bedroom. A queer little old woman brought me one of the common Child's night lights, and seeming to think that I looked at it with interest, said: "It's joost a vara keeyourious thing, sir, and joost new coom oop. It'll burn awt hoors a' end, an no gootther, nor no waste, nor ony sike a thing, if you can creedit what I say, seein' the airticle."

Of course *I* shall go to Doncaster, whether or no (please God), and my postage directions to you remain unchanged. Love to Mamey, Katey, Charley, Harry, and the darling Plorn. Ever affectionately.

LANCASTER, *Saturday Night, Sept. 12th, 1857.* Miss Hogarth.

MY DEAR GEORGY,

I received your letter at Allonby yesterday, and was delighted to get it. We came back to Carlisle last night (to a capital inn, kept by Breach's brother), and came on here to-day. We are on our way to Doncaster; but Sabbath observance throws all the trains out; and although it is not a hundred miles from here, we shall have, as well as I can make out

the complicated lists of trains, to sleep at Leeds—which I particularly detest as an odious place—tomorrow night.

Accustomed as you are to the homage which men delight to render to the Inimitable, you would be scarcely prepared for the proportions it assumes in this northern country. Station-masters assist him to alight from carriages, deputations await him in hotel entries, innkeepers bow down before him and put him into regal rooms, the town goes down to the platform to see him off, and Collins's ankle goes into the newspapers!!!

It is a great deal better than it was, and he can get into new hotels and up the stairs with two thick sticks, like an admiral in a farce. His spirits have improved in a corresponding degree, and he contemplates cheerfully the keeping house at Doncaster. I thought (as I told you) he would never have gone there, but he seems quite up to the mark now. Of course he can never walk out, or see anything of any place. We have done our first paper for H. W., and sent it up to the printer's.

The landlady of the little inn at Allonby lived at Greta Bridge, in Yorkshire, when I went down there before "Nickleby," and was smuggled into the room to see me, when I was secretly found out. She is an immensely fat woman now. "But I could tuck my arm round her waist then, Mr. Dickens," the landlord said when she told me the story as I am going to bed the night before last. "And can't you do it now," I said, "you insensible dog? Look at me! Here's a picture!" Accordingly, I got round as much of her as I could; and this gallant action was the most success-

ful I have ever performed, on the whole. I think it was the dullest little place I ever entered; and what with the monotony of an idle sea, and what with the monotony of another sea in the room (occasioned by Collins's perpetually holding his ankle over a pail of salt water, and laving it with a milk jug), I struck yesterday, and came away.

We are in a very remarkable old house here, with genuine old rooms and an uncommonly quaint staircase. I have a state bedroom, with two enormous red four-posters in it, each as big as Charley's room at Gad's Hill. Bellew is to preach here to-morrow. "And we know he is a friend of yours, sir," said the landlord, when he presided over the serving of the dinner (two little salmon trout; a sirloin steak; a brace of partridges; seven dishes of sweets; five dishes of dessert, led off by a bowl of peaches; and in the centre an enormous bride-cake)—"We always have it here, sir," said the landlord, "custom of the house." (Collins turned pale, and estimated the dinner at half a guinea each.)

This is the stupidest of letters, but all description is gone, or going, into "The Lazy Tour of Two Idle Apprentices."

Kiss the darling Plorn, who is often in my thoughts. Best love to Charley, Mamey, and Katie. I will write to you again from Doncaster, where I shall be rejoiced to find another letter from you.

Ever affectionately, my dearest Georgy.

ANGEL HOTEL, DONCASTER, *Tuesday, Sept. 15th, 1857.* Miss Hogarth.

MY DEAR GEORGY,

I found your letter here on my arrival yesterday. I had hoped that the wall would have been almost

finished by this time, and the additions to the house almost finished too—but patience, patience!

We have very good, clean, and quiet apartments here, on the second floor, looking down into the main street, which is full of horse jockeys, bettors, drunkards, and other blackguards, from morning to night—and all night. The races begin to-day and last till Friday, which is the Cup Day. I am not going to the course this morning, but have engaged a carriage (open, and pair) for to-morrow and Friday.

“The Frozen Deep’s” author gets on as well as could be expected. He can hobble up and down stairs when absolutely necessary, and limps to his bedroom on the same floor. He talks of going to the theatre to-night in a cab, which will be the first occasion of his going out, except to travel, since the accident. He sends his kind regards and thanks for enquiries and condolence. I am perpetually tidying the rooms after him, and carrying all sorts of untidy things which belong to him into his bedroom, which is a picture of disorder. You will please to imagine mine, airy and clean, little dressing-room attached, eight water-jugs (I never saw such a supply), capital sponge-bath, perfect arrangement, and exquisite neatness. We breakfast at half-past eight, and fall to work for H. W. afterwards. Then I go out, and—hem! look for subjects.

The mayor called this morning to do the honours of the town, whom it pleased the Inimitable to receive with great courtesy and affability. He propounded invitation to public *déjeuner*, which it did *not* please the Inimitable to receive, and which he graciously rejected.

That's all the news. Everything I can describe by hook or by crook, I describe for H. W. So there is nothing of that sort left for letters.

Best love to dear Mamey and Katey, and to Charley, and to Harry. Any number of kisses to the noble Plorn.

Ever affectionately.

GAD'S HILL PLACE, *Saturday Evening, Oct. 3rd, 1857.* Mr. Arthur Ryland.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have had the honour and pleasure of receiving your letter of the 28th of last month, informing me of the distinction that has been conferred upon me by the Council of the Birmingham and Midland Institute.

Allow me to assure you with much sincerity, that I am highly gratified by having been elected one of the first honorary members of that establishment. Nothing could have enhanced my interest in so important an undertaking; but the compliment is all the more welcome to me on that account.

I accept it with a due sense of its worth, with many acknowledgments and with all good wishes.

I am ever, my dear Sir, very faithfully yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Monday Night, Nov. 16th, 1857.* Mr. Edmund Yates.

MY DEAR YATES,

I retain the story with pleasure; and I need not tell you that you are not mistaken in the last lines of your note.

Excuse me, on that ground, if I say a word or two as to what I think (I mention it with a view to the future) might be better in the paper. The opening is excellent. But it passes too completely into the Irish-

man's narrative, does not light it up with the life about it, or the circumstances under which it is delivered, and does not carry through it, as I think it should with a certain indefinable subtleness, the thread with which you begin your weaving. I will tell Wills to send me the proof, and will try to show you what I mean when I shall have gone over it carefully.

Faithfully yours always.

Mr. Frank
Stone,
A.R.A.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Wednesday, Dec. 13th, 1857.*

MY DEAR STONE,

I find on enquiry that the "General Theatrical Fund" has relieved non-members in one or two instances; but that it is exceedingly unwilling to do so, and would certainly not do so again, saving on some very strong and exceptional case. As its trustee, I could not represent to it that I think it ought to sail into those open waters, for I very much doubt the justice of such cruising, with a reference to the interests of the patient people who support it out of their small earnings.

Affectionately ever.

B O O K III.

1858 TO 1870.

1858.

NARRATIVE.

ALL through this year, Charles Dickens was constantly moving about from place to place. After much and careful consideration, he had come to the determination of, for the future, giving readings for his own benefit. And although in the spring of this year he gave one reading of his "Christmas Carol" for a charity, all the other readings, beginning from the 29th April, and ever after, were for himself. In the autumn of this year he made reading tours in England, Scotland, and Ireland, always accompanied by his friend and secretary, Mr. Arthur Smith. At Newcastle, Charles Dickens was joined by his daughters, who accompanied him in his Scotch tour. The letters to his sister-in-law, and to his eldest daughter, are all given here, and will be given in all future reading tours, as they form a complete diary of his life and movements at these times. To avoid the constant repetition of the two names, the beginning of the letters will be dispensed with in all cases where they follow each other in unbroken succession. The Mr. Frederick Lehmann mentioned in the letter written from Sheffield, had married a daughter of Mr. Robert Chambers, and niece of Mrs. Wills. Coming to settle in London a short time after this date, Mr. and Mrs. Lehmann became intimately known to Charles Dickens and his family—more especially to his eldest daughter,

to whom they have been, and are, the kindest and truest of friends. The "pretty little boy" mentioned as being under Mrs. Wills's care, was their eldest son.

We give the letter to Mr. Thackeray, not because it is one of very great interest, but because, being the only one we have, we are glad to have the two names associated together in this work.

The "little speech" alluded to in this first letter to Mr. Macready was one made by Charles Dickens at a public dinner, which was given in aid of the Hospital for Sick Children in Great Ormond Street. He afterwards (early in April) gave a reading from his "Christmas Carol" for this same charity.

The Christmas number of "Household Words," mentioned in a letter to Mr. Wilkie Collins, was called "A House to Let," and contained stories written by Charles Dickens, Mr. Wilkie Collins, and other contributors to "Household Words."

Mr. W.
Wilkie
Collins.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Sunday, Jan. 17th, 1858.*

MY DEAR WILKIE,

I am very sorry to receive so bad an account of the foot. But I hope it is all in the past tense now.

I met with an incident the other day, which I think is a good deal in your way, for introduction either into a long or short story. Dr. Sutherland and Dr. Monro went over St. Luke's with me (only last Friday), to show me some distinctly and remarkably developed types of insanity. Among other patients, we passed a deaf and dumb man, now afflicted with incurable madness too, of whom they said that it was only when his madness began to develop itself in strongly-marked mad actions, that it began to be sus-

pected. "Though it had been there, no doubt, some time." This led me to consider, suspiciously, what employment he had been in, and so to ask the question. "Aye," says Dr. Sutherland, "that is the most remarkable thing of all, Mr. Dickens. He was employed in the transmission of electric-telegraph messages; and it is impossible to conceive what delirious despatches that man may have been sending about all over the world!"

Rejoiced to hear such good report of the play.

Ever faithfully.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Tuesday, Feb. 2nd*, 1858.

Mr.
Edmund
Yates.

MY DEAR YATES,

Your quotation is, as I supposed, all wrong. The text is *not* "which his 'owls was organs." When Mr. Harris went into an empty dog-kennel, to spare his sensitive nature the anguish of overhearing Mrs. Harris's exclamations on the occasion of the birth of her first child (the Princess Royal of the Harris family), "he never took his hands away from his ears, or came out once, till he was showed the baby." On encountering that spectacle, he was (being of a weakly constitution) "took with fits." For this distressing complaint he was medically treated; the doctor "collared him, and laid him on his back upon the airy stones"—please to observe what follows—"and she was told, to ease her mind, his 'owls was organs."

That is to say, Mrs. Harris, lying exhausted on her bed, in the first sweet relief of freedom from pain, merely covered with the counterpane, and not yet "put comfortable," hears a noise apparently proceeding from the back-yard, and says, in a flushed and hysteri-

cal manner: "What 'owls are those? Who is a-'owling? Not my ugebond?" Upon which the doctor, looking round one of the bottom posts of the bed, and taking Mrs. Harris's pulse in a reassuring manner, says, with much admirable presence of mind: "Howls, my dear madam?—no, no, no! What are we thinking of? Howls, my dear Mrs. Harris? Ha, ha, ha! Organs, ma'am, organs. Organs in the streets, Mrs. Harris; no howls."

Yours faithfully.

Mr. W. M.
Thackeray.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Tuesday, Feb. 2nd, 1858.*

MY DEAR THACKERAY,

The wisdom of Parliament, in that expensive act of its greatness which constitutes the Guild, prohibits that corporation *from doing anything* until it shall have existed in a perfectly useless condition for seven years. This clause (introduced by some private-bill magnate of official might) seemed so ridiculous, that nobody could believe it to have this meaning; but as I felt clear about it when we were on the very verge of granting an excellent literary annuity, I referred the point to counsel, and my construction was confirmed without a doubt.

It is therefore needless to enquire whether an association in the nature of a provident society could address itself to such a case as you confide to me. The prohibition has still two or three years of life in it.

But, assuming the gentleman's title to be considered as an "author" as established, there is no question that it comes within the scope of the Literary Fund. They would habitually "lend" money if they did what I consider to be their duty; as it is they only give money, but they give it in such instances.

I have forwarded the envelope to the Society of Arts, with a request that they will present it to Prince Albert, approaching H.R.H. in the Siamese manner.

Ever faithfully.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Wednesday Night, Feb. 3rd, 1858.*

Mr. John
Forster.

MY DEAR FORSTER,

I beg to report two phenomena:

1. An excellent little play in one act, by Marston, at the Lyceum; title, "A Hard Struggle;" as good as "La Joie fait Peur," though not at all like it.

2. Capital acting in the same play, by Mr. Dillon. Real good acting, in imitation of nobody, and honestly made out by himself!!

I went (at Marston's request) last night, and cried till I sobbed again. I have not seen a word about it from Oxenford. But it is as wholesome and manly a thing altogether as I have seen for many a day. (I would have given a hundred pounds to have played Mr. Dillon's part).

Love to Mrs. Forster.

Ever affectionately.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Wednesday, Feb. 3rd, 1858.*

Dr.
Westland
Marston.

MY DEAR MARSTON,

I most heartily and honestly congratulate you on your charming little piece. It moved me more than I could easily tell you, if I were to try. Except "La Joie fait Peur," I have seen nothing nearly so good, and there is a subtlety in the comfortable presentation of the child who is to become a devoted woman for Reuben's sake, which goes a long way beyond Madame de Girardin. I am at a loss to let you know how

much I admired it last night, or how heartily I cried over it. A touching idea, most delicately conceived and wrought out by a true artist and poet, in a spirit of noble, manly generosity, that no one should be able to study without great emotion.

It is extremely well acted by all concerned; but Mr. Dillon's performance is really admirable, and deserving of the highest commendation. It is good in these days to see an actor taking such pains, and expressing such natural and vigorous sentiment. There is only one thing I should have liked him to change. I am much mistaken if any man—least of all any such man—would crush a letter written by the hand of the woman he loved. Hold it to his heart unconsciously and look about for it the while, he might; or he might do any other thing with it that expressed a habit of tenderness and affection in association with the idea of her; but he would never crush it under any circumstances. He would as soon crush her heart.

You will see how closely I went with him, by my minding so slight an incident in so fine a performance. There is no one who could approach him in it; and I am bound to add that he surprised me as much as he pleased me.

I think it might be worth while to try the people at the Français with the piece. They are very good in one-act plays; such plays take well there, and this seems to me well suited to them. If you would like Samson or Regnier to read the play (in English), I know them well, and would be very glad indeed to tell them that I sent it with your sanction because I had been so much struck by it.

Faithfully yours always.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, LONDON, W.C., *Thursday, Feb. 11th, 1858.*Monsieur
Regnier.

MY DEAR REGNIER,

I want you to read the enclosed little play. You will see that it is in one act—about the length of “*La Joie fait Peur*.” It is now acting at the Lyceum Theatre here, with very great success. The author is Mr. Westland Marston, a dramatic writer of reputation, who wrote a very well-known tragedy called “*The Patrician’s Daughter*,” in which Macready and Miss Faucit acted (under Macready’s management at Drury Lane) some years ago.

This little piece is so very powerful on the stage, its interest is so simple and natural, and the part of Reuben is such a very fine one, that I cannot help thinking you might make one grand *coup* with it, if with your skilful hand you arranged it for the Français. I have communicated this idea of mine to the author, “*et là-dessus je vous écris*.” I am anxious to know your opinion, and shall expect with much interest to receive a little letter from you at your convenience.

Mrs. Dickens, Miss Hogarth, and all the house send a thousand kind loves and regards to Madame Regnier and the dear little boys. You will bring them to London when you come, with all the force of the Français—will you not?

Ever, my dear Regnier, faithfully your Friend.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Saturday, Feb. 20th, 1858.* The same.

MY DEAR REGNIER,

Let me thank you with all my heart for your most patient and kind letter. I made its contents known to Mr. Marston, and I enclose you his reply. You will

see that he cheerfully leaves the matter in your hands, and abides by your opinion and discretion.

You need not return his letter, my friend. There is great excitement here this morning, in consequence of the failure of the Ministry last night to carry the bill they brought in to please your Emperor and his troops. I, for one, am extremely glad of their defeat.

"Le vieux P——," I have no doubt, will go staggering down the Rue de la Paix to-day, with his stick in his hand and his hat on one side, predicting the downfall of everything, in consequence of this event. His handwriting shakes more and more every quarter, and I think he mixes a great deal of cognac with his ink. He always gives me some astonishing piece of news (which is never true), or some suspicious public prophecy (which is never verified), and he always tells me he is dying (which he never is).

Adieu, my dear Regnier, accept a thousand thanks from me, and believe me, now and always,

Your affectionate and faithful Friend.

Mr. W. C.
Macready.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *March 15th*, 1858.

MY DEAREST MACREADY,

I have safely received your cheque this morning, and will hand it over forthwith to the honorary secretary of the hospital. I hope you have read the little speech in the hospital's publication of it. They had it taken by their own shorthand-writer, and it is done verbatim.

You may be sure that it is a good and kind charity. It is amazing to me that it is not at this day ten times as large and rich as it is. But I hope and trust that I have happily been able to give it a good thrust

onward into a great course. We all send our most affectionate love to all the house. I am devising all sorts of things in my mind, and am in a state of energetic restlessness incomprehensible to the calm philosophers of Dorsetshire. What a dream it is, this work and strife, and how little we do in the dream after all! Only last night, in my sleep, I was bent upon getting over a perspective of barriers, with my hands and feet bound. Pretty much what we are all about, waking, I think?

But, Lord! (as I said before) you smile pityingly, not bitterly, at this hubbub, and moralise upon it, in the calm evenings when there is no school at Sherborne.

Ever affectionately and truly.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, TAVISTOCK SQUARE, LONDON, W.C.,

Wednesday, April 14th, 1858.

Mrs.

Hogge.*

MY DEAR MRS. HOGGE,

After the profoundest cogitation, I come reluctantly to the conclusion that I do not know that orphan. If you were the lady in want of him, I should certainly offer *myself*. But as you are not, I will not hear of the situation.

It is wonderful to think how many charming little people there must be, to whom this proposal would be like a revelation from Heaven. Why don't I know one, and come to Kensington, boy in hand, as if I had walked (I wish to God I had) out of a fairy tale! But no, I do *not* know that orphan. He is crying somewhere, by himself, at this moment. I can't dry his eyes. He is being neglected by some ogress of a nurse. I can't rescue him.

* Niece to the Rev. W. Harness.

I will make a point of going to the Athenæum on Monday night; and if I had five hundred votes to give, Mr. Macdonald should have them all, for your sake.

I grieve to hear that you have been ill, but I hope that the spring, when it comes, will find you blooming with the rest of the flowers.

Very faithfully yours.

Mr.
Edmund
Yates.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, TAVISTOCK SQUARE, LONDON, W.C.,

Wednesday, April 28th, 1858.

MY DEAR YATES,

For a good many years I have suffered a great deal from charities, but never anything like what I suffer now. The amount of correspondence they inflict upon me is really incredible. But this is nothing. Benevolent men get behind the piers of the gates, lying in wait for my going out; and when I peep shrinkingly from my study-windows, I see their pot-bellied shadows projected on the gravel. Benevolent bullies drive up in hansom cabs (with engraved portraits of their benevolent institutions hanging over the aprons, like banners on their outward walls), and stay long at the door. Benevolent area-sneaks get lost in the kitchens and are found to impede the circulation of the knife-cleaning machine. My man has been heard to say (at The Burton Arms) "that if it was a wicious place, well and good—*that* an't door work; but that wen all the Christian wirtues is always a-shoulderin' and a-helberin' on you in the 'all, a-tryin' to git past you and cut upstairs into master's room, why no wages as you couldn't name wouldn't make it up to you."

Persecuted ever.

(THE CHARMING ACTRESS, THE MOTHER OF Mrs. Yates.
MR. EDMUND YATES.)

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, TAVISTOCK SQUARE, W.C.,

Saturday Evening, May 15th, 1858.

MY DEAR MRS. YATES,

Pray believe that I was sorry with all my heart to miss you last Thursday, and to learn the occasion of your absence; also that, whenever you can come, your presence will give me a new interest in that evening. No one alive can have more delightful associations with the lightest sound of your voice than I have; and to give you a minute's interest and pleasure, in acknowledgment of the uncountable hours of happiness you gave me when you were a mysterious angel to me, would honestly gratify my heart.

Very faithfully and gratefully yours.

GAD'S HILL, *Wednesday, July 7th, 1858.*

M. de
Cerjat.

MY DEAR CERJAT,

I should vainly try to tell you—so I *won't* try—how affected I have been by your warm-hearted letter, or how thoroughly well convinced I always am of the truth and earnestness of your friendship. I thank you, my dear, dear fellow, with my whole soul. I fervently return that friendship and I highly cherish it.

You want to know all about me? I am still reading in London every Thursday, and the audiences are very great, and the success immense. On the 2nd of August I am going away on a tour of some four months in England, Ireland, and Scotland. I shall read, during that time, not fewer than four or five times a week. It will be sharp work; but probably a certain musical

clinking will come of it, which will mitigate the hardship.

At this present moment I am on my little Kentish freehold (*not* in top-boots, and not particularly prejudiced that I know of), looking on as pretty a view out of my study window as you will find in a long day's English ride. My little place is a grave red brick house (time of George the First, I suppose), which I have added to and stuck bits upon in all manner of ways, so that it is as pleasantly irregular, and as violently opposed to all architectural ideas, as the most hopeful man could possibly desire. It is on the summit of Gad's Hill. The robbery was committed before the door, on the man with the treasure, and Falstaff ran away from the identical spot of ground now covered by the room in which I write. A little rustic alehouse, called The Sir John Falstaff, is over the way—has been over the way, ever since, in honour of the event. Cobham Woods and Park are behind the house; the distant Thames in front; the Medway, with Rochester, and its old castle and cathedral, on one side. The whole stupendous property is on the old Dover Road, so when you come, come by the North Kent Railway (not the South-Eastern) to Strood or Higham, and I'll drive over to fetch you.

The blessed woods and fields have done me a world of good, and I am quite myself again. The children are all as happy as children can be. My eldest daughter, Mary, keeps house, with a state and gravity becoming that high position; wherein she is assisted by her sister Katie, and by her aunt Georgina, who is, and always has been, like another sister. Two big dogs, a bloodhound and a St. Bernhard, direct from

a convent of that name, where I think you once were, are their principal attendants in the green lanes. These latter instantly untie the neckerchiefs of all tramps and prowlers who approach their presence, so that they wander about without any escort, and drive big horses in basket-phaetons through murderous bye-ways, and never come to grief. They are very curious about your daughters, and send all kinds of loves to them and to Mrs. Cerjat, in which I heartily join.

You will have read in the papers that the Thames in London is most horrible. I have to cross Waterloo or London Bridge to get to the railroad when I come down here, and I can certify that the offensive smells, even in that short whiff, have been of a most head-and-stomach-distending nature. Nobody knows what is to be done; at least everybody knows a plan, and everybody else knows it won't do; in the meantime cart-loads of chloride of lime are shot into the filthy stream, and do something I hope. You will know, before you get this, that the American telegraph line has parted again, at which most men are sorry, but very few surprised. This is all the news, except that there is an Italian Opera at Drury Lane, price eighteenpence to the pit, where Viardot, by far the greatest artist of them all, sings, and which is full when the dear opera can't let a box; and except that the weather has been exceptionally hot, but is now quite cool. On the top of this hill it has been cold, actually cold at night, for more than a week past.

I am going over to Rochester to post this letter, and must write another to Townshend before I go. My dear Cerjat, I have written lightly enough, because I want you to know that I am becoming cheerful and

hearty. God bless you! I love you, and I know that you love me.

Ever your attached and affectionate.

Miss
Hogarth.

WEST HOE, PLYMOUTH, *Thursday, Aug. 5th, 1858.*

MY DEAREST GEORGY,

I received your letter this morning with the greatest pleasure, and read it with the utmost interest in all its domestic details.

We had a most wonderful night at Exeter. It is to be regretted that we cannot take the place again on our way back. It was a prodigious cram, and we turned away no end of people. But not only that, I think they were the finest audience I have ever read to. I don't think I ever read, in some respects, so well; and I never beheld anything like the personal affection which they poured out upon me at the end. It was really a very remarkable sight, and I shall always look back upon it with pleasure.

Last night here was not so bright. There are quarrels of the strangest kind between the Plymouth people and the Stonehouse people. The room is at Stonehouse (Tracy says the wrong room; there being a Plymouth room in this hotel, and he being a Plymouthite). We had a fair house, but not at all a great one. All the notabilities come this morning to "Little Dombey," for which we have let one hundred and thirty stalls, which local admiration of local greatness considers very large. For "Mrs. Gamp and the Boots," to-night, we have also a very promising let. But the races are on, and there are two public balls to-night, and the yacht squadron are all at Cherbourg to boot. Arthur is of opinion that "Two Sixties" will do very

well for us. I doubt the "Two Sixties" myself. *Mais nous verrons.*

The room is a very handsome one, but it is on the top of a windy and muddy hill, leading (literally) to nowhere; and it looks (except that it is new and *mortary*) as if the subsidence of the waters after the Deluge might have left it where it is. I have to go right through the company to get to the platform. Big doors slam and resound when anybody comes in; and all the company seem afraid of one another. Nevertheless they were a sensible audience last night, and much impressed and pleased.

Tracy is in the room (wandering about, and never finishing a sentence), and sends all manner of sea-loves to you and the dear girls. I send all manner of land-loves to you from myself, out of my heart of hearts, and also to my dear Plorn and the boys.

Arthur sends his kindest love. He knows only two characters. He is either always corresponding, like a Secretary of State, or he is transformed into a rout-furniture dealer of Rathbone Place, and drags forms about with the greatest violence, without his coat.

I have no time to add another word.

Ever, dearest Georgy, your most affectionate.

LONDON, *Saturday, Aug. 7th, 1858.* Miss
Dickens.

MY DEAREST MAMEY,

The closing night at Plymouth was a very great scene, and the morning there was exceedingly good too. You will be glad to hear that at Clifton last night, a torrent of five hundred shillings bore Arthur away, pounded him against the wall, flowed on to the seats

over his body, scratched him, and damaged his best dress suit. All to his unspeakable joy.

This is a very short letter, but I am going to the Burlington Arcade, desperately resolved to have all those wonderful instruments put into operation on my head, with a view to refreshing it.

Kindest love to Georgy and to all.

Ever your affectionate.

Miss
Dickens.

SHREWSBURY, *Thursday, Aug. 12th, 1858.*

A wonderful audience last night at Wolverhampton. If such a thing can be, they were even quicker and more intelligent than the audience I had in Edinburgh. They were so wonderfully good and were so much on the alert this morning by nine o'clock for another reading, that we are going back there at about our Bradford time. I never saw such people. And the local agent would take no money, and charge no expenses of his own.

This place looks what Plorn would call "ortily" dull. Local agent predicts, however, "great satisfaction to Mr. Dickens, and excellent attendance." I have just been to look at the hall, where everything was wrong, and where I have left Arthur making a platform for me out of dining-tables.

If he comes back in time, I am not quite sure but that he is himself going to write to Gad's Hill. We talk of coming up from Chester *in the night to-morrow, after the reading*; and of showing our precious selves at an apparently impossibly early hour in the Gad's Hill breakfast-room on Saturday morning.

I have not felt the fatigue to any extent worth mentioning; through I get, every night, into the most violent

heats. We are going to dine at three o'clock (it wants a quarter now) and have not been here two hours, so I have seen nothing of Clement.

Tell Georgy with my love, that I read in the same room in which we acted, but at the end opposite to that where our stage was. We are not at the inn where the amateur company put up, but at The Lion, where the fair Miss Mitchell was lodged alone. We have the strangest little rooms (sitting-room and two bed-rooms all together), the ceilings of which I can touch with my hand. The windows bulge out over the street, as if they were little stern-windows in a ship. And a door opens out of the sitting-room on to a little open gallery with plants in it, where one leans over a queer old rail, and looks all downhill and slantwise at the crookedest black and yellow old houses, all manner of shapes except straight shapes. To get into this room we come through a china closet; and the man in laying the cloth has actually knocked down, in that repository, two geraniums and Napoleon Bonaparte.

I think that's all I have to say, except that at the Wolverhampton theatre they played "Oliver Twist" last night (Mr. Toole the Artful Dodger), "in consequence of the illustrious author honouring the town with his presence." We heard that the device succeeded very well, and that they got a good many people.

John's spirits have been equable and good since we rejoined him. Berry has always got something the matter with his digestion—seems to me the male gender of Maria Jolly, and ought to take nothing but Revalenta Arabica. Bottled ale is not to be got in these parts, and Arthur is thrown upon draught.

My dearest love to Georgy and to Katey, also to Marguerite. Also to all the boys and the noble Plorn.
Ever your affectionate Father.

Miss
Hogarth.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, TAVISTOCK SQUARE, LONDON, W.C.,

Wednesday Morning, Aug. 18th, 1858.

I write this hurried line before starting, to report that my cold is decidedly better, thank God (though still bad), and that I hope to be able to stagger through to-night. After dinner yesterday I began to recover my voice, and I think I sang half the Irish Melodies to myself, as I walked about to test it. I got home at half-past ten, and mustard-poulticed and barley-watered myself tremendously.

Love to the dear girls, and to all.

Ever affectionately.

The same.

ADELPHI HOTEL, LIVERPOOL, *Friday Night, Aug. 20th, 1858.*

I received your welcome and interesting letter to-day, and I write you a very hurried and bad reply; but it is *after the reading*, and you will take the will for the deed under these trying circumstances, I know.

We have had a tremendous night; the largest house I have ever had since I first began—two thousand three hundred people. To-morrow afternoon, at three, I read again.

My cold has been oppressive, and is not yet gone. I have been very hard to sleep too, and last night I was all but sleepless. This morning I was very dull and seedy; but I got a good walk, and picked up again. It has been blowing all day, and I fear we shall have a sick passage over to Dublin to-morrow night.

Tell Mamie (with my dear love to her and Katie) that I will write to her from Dublin—probably on Sunday. Tell her too that the stories she told me in her letter were not only capital stories in themselves, but *excellently told* too.

What Arthur's state has been to-night—he, John, Berry, and Boylett, all taking money and going mad together—you *cannot* imagine. They turned away hundreds, sold all the books, rolled on the ground of my room knee-deep in checks, and made a perfect pantomime of the whole thing. He has kept quite well, I am happy to say, and sends a hundred loves.

In great haste and fatigue.

Ever affectionately.

MORRISON'S HOTEL, DUBLIN, *Monday, Aug. 23rd, 1858.* Miss Dickens.

We had a nasty crossing here. We left Holyhead at one in the morning, and got here at six. Arthur was incessantly sick the whole way. I was not sick at all, but was in as healthy a condition otherwise as humanity need be. We are in a beautiful hotel. Our sitting-room is exactly like the drawing-room at the Peschiere in all its dimensions. I never saw two rooms so exactly resembling one another in their proportions. Our bedrooms too are excellent, and there are baths and all sorts of comforts.

The Lord Lieutenant is away, and the place looks to me as if its professional life were away too. Nevertheless, there are numbers of people in the streets. Somehow, I hardly seem to think we are going to do enormously here; but I have scarcely any reason for supposing so (except that a good many houses are shut up); and I *know* nothing about it, for Arthur is

now gone to the agent and to the room. The men came by boat direct from Liverpool. They had a rough passage, were all ill, and did not get here till noon yesterday. Donnybrook Fair, or what remains of it, is going on, within two or three miles of Dublin. They went out there yesterday in a jaunting-car, and John described it to us at dinner-time (with his eyebrows lifted up, and his legs well asunder), as "Johnny Brooks's Fair;" at which Arthur, who was drinking bitter ale, nearly laughed himself to death. Berry is always unfortunate, and when I asked what had happened to Berry on board the steamboat, it appeared that "an Irish gentleman which was drunk, and fancied himself the captain, wanted to knock Berry down."

I am surprised by finding this place very much larger than I had supposed it to be. Its bye-parts are bad enough, but cleaner, too, than I had supposed them to be, and certainly very much cleaner than the old town of Edinburgh. The man who drove our jaunting-car yesterday hadn't a piece in his coat as big as a penny roll, and had had his hat on (apparently without brushing it) ever since he was grown up. But he was remarkably intelligent and agreeable, with something to say about everything. For instance, when I asked him what a certain building was, he didn't say "courts of law" and nothing else, but: "Av you plase, sir, it's the foor coorts o' looyers, where Misther O'Connell stood his trial wunst, ye'll remimber, sir, afore I tell ye of it." When we got into the Phoenix Park, he looked round him as if it were his own, and said: "THAT'S a park, sir, av yer plase." I complimented it, and he said: "Gintlemen tills me as they'r bin, sir, over Europe, and never see a park aqualling

ov it. 'Tis eight mile roond, sir, ten mile and a half long, and in the month of May the hawthorn trees are as beautiful as brides with their white jewels on. Yonder's the vice-regal lodge, sir; in them two corners lives the two sicre-tirries, wishing I was them, sir. There's air here, sir, av yer plase! There's scenery here, sir! There's mountains—thim, sir! Yer coonsider it a park, sir? It is that, sir!"

You should have heard John in my bedroom this morning endeavouring to imitate a bath-man, who had resented his interference, and had said as to the shower-bath: "Yer'll not be touching *that*, young man. Divil a touch yer'll touch o' that insthrument, young man!" It was more ridiculously unlike the reality than I can express to you, yet he was so delighted with his powers that he went off in the absurdest little ginger-beery giggle, backing into my portmanteau all the time.

My dear love to Katie and to Georgy, also to the noble Plorn and all the boys. I shall write to Katie next, and then to Aunty. My cold, I am happy to report, is very much better. I lay in the wet all night on deck, on board the boat, but am not as yet any the worse for it. Arthur was quite insensible when we got to Dublin, and stared at our luggage without in the least offering to claim it. He left his kindest love for all before he went out. I will keep the envelope open until he comes in.

Ever, my dearest Mamie,

Your most affectionate Father.

MORRISON'S HOTEL, DUBLIN, *Wednesday, Aug. 25th, 1858.*

Miss
Hogarth.

I begin my letter to you to-day, though I don't know when I may send it off. We had a very good

house last night, after all, that is to say, a great rush of shillings and good half-crowns, though the stalls were comparatively few. For "Little Dombey," this morning, we have an immense stall let—already more than two hundred—and people are now fighting in the agent's shop to take more. Through some mistake of our printer's, the evening reading for this present Wednesday was dropped, in a great part of the announcements, and the agent opened no plan for it. I have therefore resolved not to have it at all. Arthur Smith has waylaid me in all manner of ways, but I remain obdurate. I am frightfully tired, and really relieved by the prospect of an evening—overjoyed.

They were a highly excitable audience last night, but they certainly did not comprehend—internally and intellectually comprehend—"The Chimes" as a London audience do. I am quite sure of it. I very much doubt the Irish capacity of receiving the pathetic; but of their quickness as to the humorous there can be no doubt. I shall see how they go along with Little Paul, in his death, presently.

While I was at breakfast this morning, a general officer was announced with great state—having a staff at the door—and came in, booted and plumed, and covered with Crimean decorations. It was Cunningham, whom we knew in Genoa—then a captain. He was very hearty indeed, and came to ask me to dinner. Of course I couldn't go. Olliffe has a brother at Cork, who has just now (noon) written to me, proposing dinners and excursions in that neighbourhood which would fill about a week; I being there a day and a half, and reading three times. The work will be very

severe here, and I begin to feel depressed by it. (By "here," I mean Ireland generally, please to observe.)

We meant, as I said in a letter to Katie, to go to Queenstown yesterday and bask on the seashore. But there is always so much to do that we couldn't manage it after all. We expect a tremendous house to-morrow night as well as to-day; and Arthur is at the present instant up to his eyes in business (and seats), and, between his regret at losing to-night, and his desire to make the room hold twice as many as it *will* hold, is half distracted. I have become a wonderful Irishman—must play an Irish part some day—and his only relaxation is when I enact "John and the Boots," which I consequently do enact all day long. The papers are full of remarks upon my white tie, and describe it as being of enormous size, which is a wonderful delusion, because, as you very well know, it is a small tie. Generally, I am happy to report, the Emerald press is in favour of my appearance, and likes my eyes. But one gentleman comes out with a letter at Cork, wherein he says that although only forty-six I look like an old man. *He* is a rum customer, I think.

The Rutherfords are living here, and wanted me to dine with them, which, I needn't say, could not be done; all manner of people have called, but I have seen only two. John has given it up altogether as to rivalry with the Boots, and did not come into my room this morning at all. Boots appeared triumphant and alone. He was waiting for me at the hotel-door last night. "Whaa't sart of a hoose, sur?" he asked me. "Capital." "The Lard be praised fur the 'onor o' Dooblin!"

Arthur buys bad apples in the streets and brings

them home and doesn't eat them, and then I am obliged to put them in the balcony because they make the room smell faint. Also he meets countrymen with honeycomb on their heads, and leads them (by the buttonhole when they have one) to this gorgeous establishment and requests the bar to buy honeycomb for his breakfast; then it stands upon the sideboard uncovered and the flies fall into it. He buys owls, too, and castles, and other horrible objects, made in bog-oak (that material which is not appreciated at Gad's Hill); and he is perpetually snipping pieces out of newspapers and sending them all over the world. While I am reading he conducts the correspondence, and his great delight is to show me seventeen or eighteen letters when I come, exhausted, into the retiring-place. Berry has not got into any particular trouble for forty-eight hours, except that he is all over boils. I have prescribed the yeast, but ineffectually. It is indeed a sight to see him and John sitting in pay-boxes, and surveying Ireland out of pigeon-holes.

Same Evening before Bed-time.

Everybody was at "Little Dombey" to-day, and although I had some little difficulty to work them up in consequence of the excessive crowding of the place, and the difficulty of shaking the people into their seats, the effect was unmistakable and profound. The crying was universal, and they were extraordinarily affected. There is no doubt we could stay here a week with that one reading, and fill the place every night. Hundreds of people have been there to-night, under the impression that it would come off again. It was a most decided and complete success.

Arthur has been imploring me to stop here on the Friday after Limerick, and read "Little Dombey" again. But I have positively said "No." The work is too hard. It is not like doing it in one easy room, and always the same room. With a different place every night, and a different audience with its own peculiarity every night, it is a tremendous strain. I was sick of it to-day before I began, then got myself into wonderful train.

Here follows a dialogue (but it requires imitation), which I had yesterday morning with a little boy of the house—landlord's son, I suppose—about Plorn's age. I am sitting on the sofa writing, and find him sitting beside me.

INIMITABLE. Holloa, old chap.

YOUNG IRELAND. Hal-loo!

INIMITABLE (*in his delightful way*). What a nice old fellow you are. I am very fond of little boys.

YOUNG IRELAND. Air yer? Ye'r right.

INIMITABLE. What do you learn, old fellow?

YOUNG IRELAND (*very intent on Inimitable, and always childish, except in his brogue*). I lairn wureds of three sillibils, and wureds of two sillibils, and wureds of one sillibil.

INIMITABLE (*gaily*). Get out, you humbug! You learn only words of one syllable.

YOUNG IRELAND (*laughs heartily*). You may say that it is mostly wureds of one sillibil.

INIMITABLE. Can you write?

YOUNG IRELAND. Not yet. Things comes by deegrays.

INIMITABLE. Can you cipher?

YOUNG IRELAND (*very quickly*). Wha'at's that?

INIMITABLE. Can you make figures?

YOUNG IRELAND. I can make a nought, which is not asy, being roond.

INIMITABLE. I say, old boy, wasn't it you I saw on Sunday morning in the hall, in a soldier's cap? You know—in a soldier's cap?

YOUNG IRELAND (*cogitating deeply*). Was it a very good cap?

INIMITABLE. Yes.

YOUNG IRELAND. Did it fit unkommon?

INIMITABLE. Yes.

YOUNG IRELAND. Dat was me!

There are two stupid old louts at the room, to show people into their places, whom John calls "them two old Paddies," and of whom he says, that he "never see nothing like them (snigger) hold idiots" (snigger). They bow and walk backwards before the grandees, and our men hustle them while they are doing it.

We walked out last night, with the intention of going to the theatre; but the Piccolomini establishment (they were doing the "Lucia") looked so horribly like a very bad jail, and the Queen's looked so blackguardly, that we came back again, and went to bed. I seem to be always either in a railway carriage, or reading, or going to bed. I get so knocked up, whenever I have a minute to remember it, that then I go to bed as a matter of course.

I send my love to the noble Plorn, and to all the boys. To dear Mamie and Katie, and to yourself of course, in the first degree. I am looking forward to the last Irish reading on Thursday, with great impatience. But when we shall have turned this week, once knocked off Belfast, I shall see land, and shall (like poor Timber in the days of old) "keep up a good heart." I get so wonderfully hot every night in my dress clothes, that they positively won't dry in the short interval they get, and I have been obliged to write to Doudney's to make me another suit, that I may have a constant change.

Ever, my dearest Georgy, most affectionately.

Miss
Dickens.

BELFAST, *Saturday, Aug. 28th, 1858.*

When I went down to the Rotunda at Dublin on Thursday night, I said to Arthur, who came rushing at me: "You needn't tell me. I know all about it." The

moment I had come out of the door of the hotel (a mile off), I had come against the stream of people turned away. I had struggled against it to the room. There, the crowd in all the lobbies and passages was so great, that I had a difficulty in getting in. They had broken all the glass in the pay-boxes. They had offered frantic prices for stalls. Eleven bank-notes were thrust into that pay-box (Arthur saw them) at one time, for eleven stalls. Our men were flattened against walls, and squeezed against beams. Ladies stood all night with their chins against my platform. Other ladies sat all night upon my steps. You never saw such a sight. And the reading went tremendously! It is much to be regretted that we troubled ourselves to go anywhere else in Ireland. We turned away people enough to make immense houses for a week.

We arrived here yesterday at two. The room will not hold more than from eighty to ninety pounds. The same scene was repeated with the additional feature, that the people are much rougher here than in Dublin, and that there was a very great uproar at the opening of the doors, which, the police in attendance being quite inefficient and only looking on, it was impossible to check. Arthur was in the deepest misery because shillings got into stalls, and half-crowns got into shillings, and stalls got nowhere, and there was immense confusion. It ceased, however, the moment I showed myself; and all went most brilliantly, in spite of a great piece of the cornice of the ceiling falling with a great crash within four or five inches of the head of a young lady on my platform (I was obliged to have people there), and in spite of my gas suddenly going out at the time of the game of forfeits

at Scrooge's nephew's, through some Belfastian gentleman accidentally treading on the flexible pipe, and needing to be relighted.

We shall not get to Cork before mid-day on Monday; it being difficult to get from here on a Sunday. We hope to be able to start away to-morrow morning to see the Giant's Causeway (some sixteen miles off), and in that case we shall sleep at Dublin to-morrow night, leaving here by the train at half-past three in the afternoon. Dublin, you must understand, is on the way to Cork. This is a fine place, surrounded by lofty hills. The streets are very wide, and the place is very prosperous. The whole ride from Dublin here is through a very picturesque and various country; and the amazing thing is, that it is all particularly neat and orderly, and that the houses (outside at all events) are all brightly whitewashed and remarkably clean. I want to climb one of the neighbouring hills before this morning's "Dombey." I am now waiting for Arthur, who has gone to the bank to remit his last accumulation of treasure to London.

Our men are rather indignant with the Irish crowds, because in the struggle they don't sell books, and because, in the pressure, they can't force a way into the room afterwards to sell them. They are deeply interested in the success, however, and are as zealous and ardent as possible. I shall write to Katie next. Give her my best love, and kiss the darling Plorn for me, and give my love to all the boys.

Ever, my dearest Mamie,

Your most affectionate Father.

MORRISON'S HOTEL, DUBLIN, *Sunday Night, Aug. 29th, 1858.* Miss Hogarth.

I am so delighted to find your letter here to-night (eleven o'clock), and so afraid that, in the wear and tear of this strange life, I have written to Gad's Hill in the wrong order, and have not written to you, as I should, that I resolve to write this before going to bed. You will find it a wretchedly stupid letter; but you may imagine, my dearest girl, that I am tired.

The success at Belfast has been equal to the success here. Enormous! We turned away half the town. I think them a better audience, on the whole, than Dublin; and the personal affection there was something overwhelming. I wish you and the dear girls could have seen the people look at me in the street; or heard them ask me, as I hurried to the hotel after reading last night, to "do me the honour to shake hands, Misther Dickens, and God bless you, sir; not ounly for the light you've been to me this night, but for the light you've been in mee house, sir (and God love your face), this many a year." Every night, by-the-bye, since I have been in Ireland, the ladies have beguiled John out of the bouquet from my coat. And yesterday morning, as I had showered the leaves from my geranium in reading "Little Dombey," they mounted the platform, after I was gone, and picked them all up as keepsakes!

I have never seen *men* go in to cry so undisguisedly as they did at that reading yesterday afternoon. They made no attempt whatever to hide it, and certainly cried more than the women. As to the "Boots" at night, and "Mrs. Gamp" too, it was just one roar with

me and them; for they made me laugh so that sometimes I *could not* compose my face to go on.

You must not let the new idea of poor dear Landor efface the former image of the fine old man. I wouldn't blot him out, in his tender gallantry, as he sat upon that bed at Forster's that night, for a million of wild mistakes at eighty years of age.

I hope to be at Tavistock House before five o'clock next Saturday morning, and to lie in bed half the day, and come home by the 10.50 on Sunday.

Tell the girls that Arthur and I have each ordered at Belfast a trim, sparkling, slap-up *Irish jaunting-car!!!* I flatter myself we shall astonish the Kentish people. It is the oddest carriage in the world, and you are always falling off. But it is gay and bright in the highest degree. Wonderfully Neapolitan.

What with a sixteen mile ride before we left Belfast, and a sea-beach walk, and a two o'clock dinner, and a seven hours' railway ride since, I am—as we say here—"a thrifle weary." But I really am in wonderful force, considering the work. For which I am, as I ought to be, very thankful.

Arthur was exceedingly unwell last night—could not cheer up at all. He was so very unwell that he left the hall (!) and became invisible after my five minutes' rest. I found him at the hotel in a jacket and slippers, and with a hot bath just ready. He was in the last stage of prostration. The local agent was with me, and proposed that he (the wretched Arthur) should go to his office and balance the accounts then and there. He went, in the jacket and slippers, and came back in twenty minutes, *perfectly well*, in consequence of the admirable balance. He is now sitting

opposite to me ON THE BAG OF SILVER, forty pounds (it must be dreadfully hard), writing to Boulogne.

I suppose it is clear that the next letter I write is Katie's. Either from Cork or from Limerick, it shall report further. At Limerick I read in the theatre, there being no other place.

Best love to Mamie and Katie, and dear Plorn, and all the boys left when this comes to Gad's Hill; also to my dear good Anne, and her little woman.

Ever affectionately.

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,

Monday, Sept. 6th, 1858.

Mr. W.
Wilkie
Collins.

MY DEAR WILKIE,

First, let me report myself here for something less than eight-and-forty hours. I come last (and direct—a pretty hard journey) from Limerick. The success in Ireland has been immense.

The work is very hard, sometimes overpowering; but I am none the worse for it, and arrived here quite fresh.

Secondly, will you let me recommend the enclosed letter from Wigan, as the groundwork of a capital article, in your way, for H. W.? There is not the least objection to a plain reference to him, or to Phelps, to whom the same thing happened a year or two ago, near Islington, in the case of a clever and capital little daughter of his. I think it a capital opportunity for a discourse on gentility, with a glance at those other schools which advertise that the "sons of gentlemen only" are admitted, and a just recognition of the greater liberality of our public schools. There are tradesmen's sons at Eton, and Charles Kean was

at Eton, and Macready (also an actor's son) was at Rugby. Some such title as "Scholastic Flunkeydom," or anything infinitely contemptuous, would help out the meaning. Surely such a schoolmaster must swallow all the silver forks that the pupils are expected to take when they come, and are not expected to take away with them when they go. And of course he could not exist, unless he had flunkey customers by the dozen.

Secondly—no, this is thirdly now—about the Christmas number. I have arranged so to stop my readings, as to be available for it on *the 15th of November*, which will leave me time to write a good article, if I clear my way to one. Do you see your way to our making a Christmas number of this idea that I am going very briefly to hint? Some disappointed person, man or woman, prematurely disgusted with the world, for some reason or no reason (the person should be young, I think) retires to an old lonely house, or an old lonely mill, or anything you like, with one attendant, resolved to shut out the world, and hold no communion with it. The one attendant sees the absurdity of the idea, pretends to humour it, but really thus to slaughter it. Everything that happens, everybody that comes near, every breath of human interest that floats into the old place from the village, or the heath, or the four cross-roads near which it stands, and from which belated travellers stray into it, shows beyond mistake that you can't shut out the world; that you are in it, to be of it; that you get into a false position the moment you try to sever yourself from it; and that you must mingle with it, and make the best of it, and make the best of yourself into the bargain.

If we could plot out a way of doing this together, I would not be afraid to take my part. If we could not, could we plot out a way of doing it, and taking in stories by other hands? If we could not do either (but I think we could), shall we fall back upon a round of stories again? That I would rather not do, if possible. Will you think about it?

And can you come and dine at Tavistock House *on Monday, the 20th September, at half-past five?* I purpose being at home there with the girls that day.

Answer this, according to my printed list for the week. I am off to Huddersfield on Wednesday morning.

I think I will now leave off; merely adding that I have got a splendid brogue (it really is exactly like the people), and that I think of coming out as the only legitimate successor of poor Power.

Ever, my dear Wilkie, affectionately yours.

STATION HOTEL, YORK, *Friday, Sept. 10th, 1858.* Miss Mary Boyle.

DEAREST MEERY,

First let me tell you that all the magicians and spirits in your employ have fulfilled the instructions of their wondrous mistress to admiration. Flowers have fallen in my path wherever I have trod; and when they rained upon me at Cork I was more amazed than you ever saw me.

Secondly, receive my hearty and loving thanks for that same. (Excuse a little Irish in the turn of that sentence, but I can't help it).

Thirdly, I have written direct to Mr. Boddington, explaining that I am bound to be in Edinburgh on

the day when he courteously proposes to do me honour.

I really cannot tell you how truly and tenderly I feel your letter, and how gratified I am by its contents. Your truth and attachment are always so precious to me that I *cannot* get my heart out on my sleeve to show it you. It is like a child, and, at the sound of some familiar voices, "goes and hides."

You know what an affection I have for Mrs. Watson, and how happy it made me to see her again—*younger, much, than when I first knew her in Switzerland.*

God bless you always!

Ever affectionately yours.

Miss
Hogarth.

ROYAL HOTEL, SCARBOROUGH, *Sunday, Sept. 11th, 1858.*

MY DEAREST GEORGY,

We had a very fine house indeed at York. All kinds of applications have been made for another reading there, and no doubt it would be exceedingly productive; but it cannot be done. At Harrogate yesterday; the queerest place, with the strangest people in it, leading the oddest lives of dancing, newspaper reading, and tables d'hôte. The piety of York obliging us to leave that place for this at six this morning, and there being no night train from Harrogate, we had to engage a special engine. We got to bed at one, and were up again before five; which, after yesterday's fatigues, leaves me a little worn out at this present.

I have no accounts of this place as yet, nor have I received any letter here. But the post of this morning is not yet delivered, I believe. We have a charm-

ing room, overlooking the sea. Leech is here (living within a few doors), with the partner of his bosom, and his young family. I write at ten in the morning, having been here two hours; and you will readily suppose that I have not seen him.

Of news, I have not the faintest breath. I seem to have been doing nothing all my life but riding in railway-carriages and reading. The railway of the morning brought us through Castle Howard, and under the woods of Easthorpe, and then just below Malton Abbey, where I went to poor Smithson's funeral. It was a most lovely morning, and, tired as I was, I couldn't sleep for looking out of window.

Yesterday, at Harrogate, two circumstances occurred which gave Arthur great delight. Firstly, he chafed his legs sore with his black bag of silver. Secondly, the landlord asked him as a favour, "If he could oblige him with a little silver." He obliged him directly with some forty pounds' worth; and I suspect the landlord to have repented of having approached the subject. After the reading last night we walked over the moor to the railway, three miles, leaving our men to follow with the luggage in a light cart. They passed us just short of the railway, and John was making the night hideous and terrifying the sleeping country, by *playing the horn* in prodigiously horrible and unmusical blasts.

My dearest love, of course, to the dear girls, and to the noble Plorn. Apropos of children, there was one gentleman at the "Little Dombey" yesterday morning, who exhibited, or rather concealed, the profoundest grief. After crying a good deal without hiding it, he covered his face with both his hands,

and laid it down on the back of the seat before him, and really shook with emotion. He was not in mourning, but I supposed him to have lost some child in old time. There was a remarkably good fellow of thirty or so, too, who found something so very ludicrous in "Toots," that he *could not* compose himself at all, but laughed until he sat wiping his eyes with his handkerchief. And whenever he felt "Toots" coming again he began to laugh and wipe his eyes afresh, and when he came he gave a kind of cry, as if it were too much for him. It was uncommonly droll, and made me laugh heartily.

Ever, dear Georgy, your most affectionate.

Miss
Dickens.

SCARBOROUGH ARMS, LEEDS, *Wednesday, Sept. 15th, 1858.*

MY DEAREST MAMIE,

I have added a pound to the cheque. I would recommend your seeing the poor railway man again and giving him ten shillings, and telling him to let you see him again in about a week. If he be then still unable to lift weights and handle heavy things, I would then give him another ten shillings, and so on.

Since I wrote to Georgy from Scarborough, we have had, thank God, nothing but success. The Hull people (not generally considered excitable, even on their own showing) were so enthusiastic, that we were obliged to promise to go back there for two readings. I have positively resolved not to lengthen out the time of my tour, so we are now arranging to drop some small places, and substitute Hull again and York again. But you will perhaps have heard this in the main from Arthur. I know he wrote to you after the reading last night.

This place I have always doubted, knowing that we should come here when it was recovering from the double excitement of the festival and the Queen. But there is a very large hall let indeed, and the prospect of to-night consequently looks bright.

Arthur told you, I suppose, that he had his shirt-front and waistcoat torn off last night? He was perfectly enraptured in consequence. Our men got so knocked about that he gave them five shillings apiece on the spot. John passed several minutes upside down against a wall, with his head amongst the people's boots. He came out of the difficulty in an exceedingly touzled condition, and with his face much flushed. For all this, and their being packed as you may conceive they would be packed, they settled down the instant I went in, and never wavered in the closest attention for an instant. It was a very high room, and required a great effort.

Oddly enough, I slept in this house three days last year with Wilkie. Arthur has the bedroom I occupied then, and I have one two doors from it, and Gordon has the one between. Not only is he still with us, but he *has* talked of going on to Manchester, going on to London, and coming back with us to Darlington next Tuesday!!!

These streets look like a great circus with the season just finished. All sorts of garish triumphal arches were put up for the Queen, and they have got smoky, and have been looked out of countenance by the sun, and are blistered and patchy, and half up and half down, and are hideous to behold. Spiritless men (evidently drunk for some time in the royal honour) are slowly removing them, and on the whole it is more

like the clearing away of "The Frozen Deep" at Tavistock House than anything within your knowledge—with the exception that we are not in the least sorry, as we were then. Vague ideas are in Arthur's head that when we come back to Hull, we are to come here, and are to have the Town Hall (a beautiful building), and read to the million. I can't say yet. That depends. I remember that when I was here before (I came from Rockingham to make a speech), I thought them a dull and slow audience. I hope I may have been mistaken. I never saw better audiences than the Yorkshire audiences generally.

I am so perpetually at work or asleep, that I have not a scrap of news. I saw the Leech family at Scarboro', both in my own house (that is to say, hotel) and in theirs. They were not at either reading. Scarboro' is gay and pretty, and I think Gordon had an idea that we were always at some such place.

Kiss the darling Plorn for me, and give him my love; dear Katie too, giving her the same. I feel sorry that I cannot get down to Gad's Hill this next time, but I shall look forward to our being there with Georgy, after Scotland. Tell the servants that I remember them, and hope they will live with us many years.

Ever, my dearest Mamie,
Your most affectionate Father.

Miss
Hogarth.

KING'S HEAD, SHEFFIELD, *Friday, Sept. 17th, 1858.*

I write you a few lines to Tavistock House, thinking you may not be sorry to find a note from me there on your arrival from Gad's Hill.

Halifax was too small for us. I never saw such

an audience though. They were really worth reading to for nothing, though I didn't do exactly that. It is as horrible a place as I ever saw, I think.

The run upon the tickets here is so immense that Arthur is obliged to get great bills out, signifying that no more can be sold. It will be by no means easy to get into the place the numbers who have already paid. It is the hall we acted in. Crammed to the roof and the passages. We must come back here towards the end of October, and are again altering the list and striking out small places.

The trains are so strange and unintelligible in this part of the country that we were obliged to leave Halifax at eight this morning, and breakfast on the road—at Huddersfield again, where we had an hour's wait. Wills was in attendance on the platform, and took me (here at Sheffield, I mean) out to Frederick Lehmann's house to see Mrs. Wills. She looked pretty much the same as ever, I thought, and was taking care of a very pretty little boy. The house and grounds are as nice as anything *can* be in this smoke. A heavy thunderstorm is passing over the town, and it is raining hard too.

This is a stupid letter, my dearest Georgy, but I write in a hurry, and in the thunder and lightning, and with the crowd of to-night before me.

Ever most affectionately.

STATION HOTEL, NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE,

Sunday, Sept. 26th, 1858.

Miss
Hogarth.

EXTRACT.

The girls (as I have no doubt they have already told you for themselves) arrived here in good time

yesterday, and in very fresh condition. They persisted in going to the room last night, though I had arranged for their remaining quiet.

We have done a vast deal here. I suppose you know that we are going to Berwick, and that we mean to sleep there and go on to Edinburgh on Monday morning, arriving there before noon? If it be as fine to-morrow as it is to-day, the girls will see the coast piece of railway between Berwick and Edinburgh to great advantage. I was anxious that they should, because that kind of pleasure is really almost the only one they are likely to have in their present trip.

Stanfield and Roberts are in Edinburgh, and the Scottish Royal Academy gave them a dinner on Wednesday, to which I was very pressingly invited. But, of course, my going was impossible. I read twice that day.

Remembering what you do of Sunderland, you will be surprised that our profit there was very considerable. I read in a beautiful new theatre, and (I thought to myself) quite wonderfully. Such an audience I never beheld for rapidity and enthusiasm. The room in which we acted (converted into a theatre afterwards) was burnt to the ground a year or two ago. We found the hotel, so bad in our time, really good. I walked from Durham to Sunderland, and from Sunderland to Newcastle.

Don't you think, as we shall be at home at eleven in the forenoon this day fortnight, that it will be best for you and Plornish to come to Tavistock House for that Sunday, and for us all to go down to Gad's Hill next day? My best love to the noble

Plornish. If he is quite reconciled to the postponement of his trousers, I should like to behold his first appearance in them. But, if not, as he is such a good fellow, I think it would be a pity to disappoint and try him.

And now, my dearest Georgy, I think I have said all I have to say before I go out for a little air. I had a very hard day yesterday, and am tired.

Ever your most affectionate.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, TAVISTOCK SQUARE, LONDON,

Sunday, Oct. 10th, 1858.

Mr. John
Forster.

MY DEAR FORSTER,

As to the truth of the readings, I cannot tell you what the demonstrations of personal regard and respect are. How the densest and most uncomfortably-packed crowd will be hushed in an instant when I show my face. How the youth of colleges, and the old men of business in the town, seem equally unable to get near enough to me when they cheer me away at night. How common people and gentlefolks will stop me in the streets and say: "Mr. Dickens, will you let me touch the hand that has filled my home with so many friends?" And if you saw the mothers, and fathers, and sisters, and brothers in mourning, who invariably come to "Little Dombey," and if you studied the wonderful expression of comfort and reliance with which they hang about me, as if I had been with them, all kindness and delicacy, at their own little death-bed, you would think it one of the strangest things in the world.

As to the mere effect, of course I don't go on doing the thing so often without carefully observing my-

self and the people too in every little thing, and without (in consequence) greatly improving in it.

At Aberdeen, we were crammed to the street twice in one day. At Perth (where I thought when I arrived there literally could be nobody to come), the nobility came posting in from thirty miles round, and the whole town came and filled an immense hall. As to the effect, if you had seen them after Lilian died in "The Chimes," or when Scrooge woke and talked to the boy outside the window, I doubt if you would ever have forgotten it. And at the end of "Dombey" yesterday afternoon, in the cold light of day, they all got up, after a short pause, gentle and simple, and thundered and waved their hats with that astonishing heartiness and fondness for me, that for the first time in all my public career they took me completely off my legs, and I saw the whole eighteen hundred of them reel on one side as if a shock from without had shaken the hall.

The dear girls have enjoyed themselves immensely, and their trip has been a great success. I hope I told you (but I forget whether I did or no) how splendidly Newcastle* came out. I am reminded of Newcastle at the moment because they joined me there.

I am anxious to get to the end of my readings, and to be at home again, and able to sit down and think in my own study. But the fatigue, though sometimes very great indeed, hardly tells upon me at all. And although all our people, from Smith downwards, have given in, more or less, at times, I have never been in the least unequal to the work, though sometimes suffi-

* The birthplace of Mr. Forster.

ciently disinclined for it. My kindest and best love to Mrs. Forster.

Ever affectionately.

ROYAL HOTEL, DERBY, *Friday, Oct. 22nd, 1858.*

Miss
Dickens.

MY DEAREST MAMIE,

I am writing in a very poor condition; I have a bad cold all over me, pains in my back and limbs, and a very sensitive and uncomfortable throat. There was a great draught up some stone steps near me last night, and I daresay that caused it.

The weather on my first two nights at Birmingham was so intolerably bad—it blew hard, and never left off raining for one single moment—that the houses were not what they otherwise would have been. On the last night the weather cleared, and we had a grand house.

Last night at Nottingham was almost, if not quite, the most amazing we have had. It is not a very large place, and the room is by no means a very large one, but three hundred and twenty stalls were let, and all the other tickets were sold.

Here we have two hundred and twenty stalls let for to-night, and the other tickets are gone in proportion. It is a pretty room, but not large.

I have just been saying to Arthur that if there is not a large let for York, I would rather give it up, and get Monday at Gad's Hill. We have telegraphed to know. If the answer comes (as I suppose it will) before post time, I will tell you in a postscript what we decide to do. Coming to London in the night of to-morrow (Saturday), and having to see Mr. Ouvry on Sunday, and having to start for York early on Monday,

I fear I should not be able to get to Gad's Hill at all. You won't expect me till you see me.

Arthur and I have considered Plornish's joke in all the immense number of aspects in which it presents itself to reflective minds. We have come to the conclusion that it is the best joke ever made. Give the dear boy my love, and the same to Georgy, and the same to Katey, and take the same yourself. Arthur (excessively low and inarticulate) mutters that he "unites."

[We knocked up Boylett, Berry, and John so frightfully yesterday, by tearing the room to pieces and altogether reversing it, as late as four o'clock, that we gave them a supper last night. They shine all over to-day, as if it had been entirely composed of grease.]

Ever, my dearest Mamie,

Your most affectionate Father.

Miss
Hogarth.

WOLVERHAMPTON, *Wednesday, Nov. 3rd, 1858.*

Little Leamington came out in the most amazing manner yesterday—turned away hundreds upon hundreds of people. They are represented as the dullest and worst of audiences. I found them very good indeed, even in the morning.

There awaited me at the hotel, a letter from the Rev. Mr. Young, Wentworth Watson's tutor, saying that Mrs. Watson wished her boy to shake hands with me, and that he would bring him in the evening. I expected him at the hotel before the readings. But he did not come. He spoke to John about it in the room at night. The crowd and confusion, however, were very great, and I saw nothing of him. In his letter he said that Mrs. Watson was at Paris on her way

home, and would be at Brighton at the end of this week. I suppose I shall see her there at the end of next week.

We find a lot of two hundred stalls here, which is very large for this place. The evening being fine too, and blue being to be seen in the sky beyond the smoke, we expect to have a very full hall. Tell Mamey and Katey that if they had been with us on the railway to-day between Leamington and this place, they would have seen (though it is only an hour and ten minutes by the express) fires and smoke indeed. We came through a part of the Black Country that you know, and it looked at its blackest. All the furnaces seemed in full blast, and all the coal-pits to be working.

It is market-day here, and the ironmasters are standing out in the street (where they always hold high change), making such an iron hum and buzz, that they confuse me horribly. In addition, there is a bellman announcing something—not the readings, I beg to say—and there is an excavation being made in the centre of the open place, for a statue, or a pump, or a lamp-post, or something or other, round which all the Wolverhampton boys are yelling and struggling.

And here is Arthur, begging to have dinner at half-past three instead of four, because he foresees “a wiry evening” in store for him. Under which complication of distractions, to which a waitress with a tray at this moment adds herself, I sink, and leave off.

My best love to the dear girls, and to the noble Plorn, and to you. Marguerite and Ellen Stone not

forgotten. All yesterday and to-day I have been doing everything to the tune of:

And the day is dark and dreary.

Ever, dearest Georgy,
Your most affectionate and faithful.

P.S.—I hope the brazier is intolerably hot, and half stifles all the family. Then, and not otherwise, I shall think it in satisfactory work.

Rev.
James
White.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, TAVISTOCK SQUARE, LONDON, W.C.,

Friday, Nov. 5th, 1858.

MY DEAR WHITE,

May I entreat you to thank Mr. Carter very earnestly and kindly in my name, for his proffered hospitality; and, further, to explain to him that since my readings began, I have known them to be incompatible with all social enjoyments, and have neither set foot in a friend's house nor sat down to a friend's table in any one of all the many places I have been to, but have rigidly kept myself to my hotels. To this resolution I must hold until the last. There is not the least virtue in it. It is a matter of stern necessity, and I submit with the worst grace possible.

Will you let me know, either at Southampton or Portsmouth, whether any of you, and how many of you, if any, are coming over, so that Arthur Smith may reserve good seats? Tell Lotty I hope she does not contemplate coming to the morning reading; I always hate it so myself.

Mary and Katey are down at Gad's Hill with Georgy and Plornish, and they have Marguerite Power and Ellen

Stone staying there. I am sorry to say that even my benevolence describes no prospect of their being able to come to my native place.

On Saturday week, the 13th, my tour, please God, ends.

My best love to Mrs. White, and to Lotty, and to Clara.

Ever, my dear White, affectionately yours.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, TAVISTOCK SQUARE, LONDON, W.C.,

Monday, Dec. 13th, 1858.

Mr. Frank
Stone,
A.R.A.

MY DEAR STONE,

Many thanks for these discourses. They are very good, I think, as expressing what many men have felt and thought; otherwise not specially remarkable. They have one fatal mistake, which is a canker at the foot of their ever being widely useful. Half the misery and hypocrisy of the Christian world arises (as I take it) from a stubborn determination to refuse the New Testament as a sufficient guide in itself, and to force the Old Testament into alliance with it—whereof comes all manner of camel-swallowing and of gnat-straining. But so to resent this miserable error, or to (by any implication) depreciate the divine goodness and beauty of the New Testament, is to commit even a worse error. And to class Jesus Christ with Mahomet is simply audacity and folly. I might as well hoist myself on to a high platform, to inform my disciples that the lives of King George the Fourth and of King Alfred the Great belonged to one and the same category.

Ever affectionately.

Mr. B. W.
Procter.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Sunday, Dec. 18th, 1858.*

MY DEAR PROCTER,

A thousand thanks for the little song. I am charmed with it, and shall be delighted to brighten "Household Words" with such a wise and genial light. I no more believe that your poetical faculty has gone by, than I believe that you have yourself passed to the better land. You and it will travel thither in company, rely upon it. So I still hope to hear more of the trade-songs, and to learn that the blacksmith has hammered out no end of iron into good fashion of verse, like a cunning workman, as I know him of old to be.

Very faithfully yours, my dear Procter.

1859.

NARRATIVE.

DURING the winter, Charles Dickens was living at Tavistock House, removing to Gad's Hill for the summer early in June, and returning to London in November. At this time a change was made in his weekly journal. "Household Words" became absolutely his own—Mr. Wills being his partner and editor, as before—and was "incorporated with 'All the Year Round,'" under which title it was known thenceforth. The office was still in Wellington Street, but in a different house. The first number with the new name appeared on the 30th April, and it contained the opening of "A Tale of Two Cities."

The first letter which follows shows that a proposal for a series of readings in America had already been

made to him. It was carefully considered and abandoned for the time. But the proposal was constantly renewed, and the idea never wholly relinquished for many years before he actually decided on making so distant a "reading tour."

Mr. Procter contributed to the early numbers of "All the Year Round" some very spirited "Songs of the Trades." We give notes from Charles Dickens to the veteran poet, both in the last year, and in this year, expressing his strong approval of them.

The letter and two notes to Mr. (afterwards Sir Antonio) Panizzi, for which we are indebted to Mr. Louis Fagan, one of Sir A. Panizzi's executors, show the warm sympathy and interest which he always felt for the cause of Italian liberty, and for the sufferings of the State prisoners who at this time took refuge in England.

We give a little note to the dear friend and companion of Charles Dickens's daughters, "Lotty" White, because it is a pretty specimen of his writing, and because the young girl, who is playfully "commanded" to get well and strong, died early in July of this year. She was, at the time this note was written, first attacked with the illness which was fatal to all her sisters. Mamie and Kate Dickens went from Gad's Hill to Bonchurch to pay a last visit to their friend, and he writes to his eldest daughter there. Also we give notes of loving sympathy and condolence to the bereaved father and mother.

In the course of this summer Charles Dickens was not well, and went for a week to his old favourite, Broadstairs—where Mr. Wilkie Collins and his brother, Mr. Charles Allston Collins, were staying—for sea-air

and change, preparatory to another reading tour, in England only. His letter from Peterborough to Mr. Frank Stone, giving him an account of a reading at Manchester (Mr. Stone's native town), was one of the last ever addressed to that affectionate friend, who died very suddenly, to the great grief of Charles Dickens, in November. The letter to Mr. Thomas Longman, which closes this year, was one of introduction to that gentleman of young Marcus Stone, then just beginning his career as an artist, and to whom the premature death of his father made it doubly desirable that he should have powerful helping hands.

Charles Dickens refers, in a letter to Mrs. Watson, to his portrait by Mr. Frith, which was finished at the end of 1858. It was painted for Mr. Forster, and is now in the "Forster Collection" at the South Kensington Museum.

The Christmas number of this year, again written by several hands as well as his own, was "The Haunted House." In November, his story of "A Tale of Two Cities" was finished in "All the Year Round," and in December was published, complete, with dedication to Lord John Russell.

Mr. Arthur
Smith.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, TAVISTOCK SQUARE, LONDON, W.C.,

Wednesday, Jan. 26th, 1859.

MY DEAR ARTHUR,

Will you first read the enclosed letters, having previously welcomed, with all possible cordiality, the bearer, Mr. Thomas C. Evans, from New York?

You having read them, let me explain that Mr. Fields is a highly respectable and influential man, one of the heads of the most classical and most respected

publishing house in America; that Mr. Richard Grant White is a man of high reputation; and that Felton is the Greek Professor in their Cambridge University, perhaps the most distinguished scholar in the States.

The address to myself, referred to in one of the letters, being on its way, it is quite clear that I must give some decided and definite answer to the American proposal. Now, will you carefully discuss it with Mr. Evans before I enter on it at all? Then, will you dine here with him on Sunday—which I will propose to him—and arrange to meet at half-past four for an hour's discussion.

The points are these:

First. I have a very grave question within myself whether I could go to America at all.

Secondly. If I did go, I could not possibly go before the autumn.

Thirdly. If I did go, how long must I stay?

Fourthly. If the stay were a short one, could *you* go?

Fifthly. What is his project? What could I make? What occurs to you upon his proposal?

I have told him that the business arrangements of the readings have been from the first so entirely in your hands, that I enter upon nothing connected with them without previous reference to you.

Ever faithfully.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Tuesday, Feb. 1st, 1859.*

M. de
Cerjat.

MY DEAR CERJAT,

I received your always welcome annual with even more interest than usual this year, being (in common

with my two girls and their aunt) much excited and pleased by your account of your daughter's engagement. Apart from the high sense I have of the affectionate confidence with which you tell me what lies so tenderly on your own heart, I have followed the little history with a lively sympathy and regard for her. I hope, with you, that it is full of promise, and that you will all be happy in it. The separation, even in the present condition of travel (and no man can say how much the discovery of a day may advance it), is nothing. And so God bless her and all of you, and may the rosy summer bring her all the fulness of joy that we all wish her.

To pass from the altar to Townshend (which is a long way), let me report him severely treated by Bully, who rules him with a paw of iron; and complaining, moreover, of indigestion. He drives here every Sunday, but at all other times is mostly shut up in his beautiful house, where I occasionally go and dine with him *tête-à-tête*, and where we always talk of you and drink to you. That is a rule with us from which we never depart. He is "seeing a volume of poems through the press;" rather an expensive amusement. He has not been out at night (except to this house) save last Friday, when he went to hear me read "The Poor Traveller," "Mrs. Gamp," and "The Trial" from "Pickwick." He came into my room at St. Martin's Hall, and I fortified him with weak brandy-and-water. You will be glad to hear that the said readings are a greater *furor* than they ever have been, and that every night on which they now take place—once a week—hundreds go away, unable to get in, though the hall holds thirteen hundred people. I dine with —— to-

day, by-the-bye, along with his agent; concerning whom I observe him to be always divided between an unbounded confidence and a little latent suspicion. He always tells me that he is a gem of the first water; oh yes, the best of business men! and then says that he did not quite like his conduct respecting that farm-tenant and those hay-ricks.

There is a general impression here, among the best-informed, that war in Italy, to begin with, is inevitable, and will break out before April. I know a gentleman at Genoa (Swiss by birth), deeply in with the authorities at Turin, who is already sending children home.

In England we are quiet enough. There is a world of talk, as you know, about Reform bills; but I don't believe there is any general strong feeling on the subject. According to my perceptions, it is undeniable that the public has fallen into a state of indifference about public affairs, mainly referable, as I think, to the people who administer them—and there I mean the people of all parties—which is a very bad sign of the times. The general mind seems weary of debates and honourable members, and to have taken *laissez-aller* for its motto.

My affairs domestic (which I know are not without their interest for you) flow peacefully. My eldest daughter is a capital housekeeper, heads the table gracefully, delegates certain appropriate duties to her sister and her aunt, and they are all three devotedly attached. Charley, my eldest boy, remains in Barings' house. Your present correspondent is more popular than he ever has been. I rather think that the readings in the country have opened up a new public who were outside before; but however that may be, his

books have a wider range than they ever had, and his public welcomes are prodigious. Said correspondent is at present overwhelmed with proposals to go and read in America. Will never go, unless a small fortune be first paid down in money on this side of the Atlantic. Stated the figure of such payment, between ourselves, only yesterday. Expects to hear no more of it, and assuredly will never go for less. You don't say, my dear Cerjat, when you are coming to England! Somehow I feel that this marriage ought to bring you over, though I don't know why. You shall have a bed here and a bed at Gad's Hill, and we will go and see strange sights together. When I was in Ireland, I ordered the brightest jaunting-car that ever was seen. It has just this minute arrived per steamer from Belfast. Say you are coming, and you shall be the first man turned over by it; somebody must be (for my daughter Mary drives anything that can be harnessed, and I know of no English horse that would understand a jaunting-car coming down a Kentish hill), and you shall be that somebody if you will. They turned the basket phaeton over, last summer, in a bye-road—Mary and the other two—and had to get it up again; which they did, and came home as if nothing had happened. They send their loves to Mrs. Cerjat, and to you, and to all, and particularly to the dear *fiancée*. So do I, with all my heart, and am ever your attached and affectionate friend.

Mr.
Antonio
Panizzi.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Monday Night, March 14th, 1859.*

MY DEAR PANIZZI,

If you should feel no delicacy in mentioning, or should see no objection to mentioning, to Signor

Poerio, or any of the wronged Neapolitan gentlemen to whom it is your happiness and honour to be a friend on their arrival in this country, an idea that has occurred to me, I should regard it as a great kindness in you if you would be my exponent. I think you will have no difficulty in believing that I would not, on any consideration, obtrude my name or projects upon any one of those noble souls, if there were any reason of the slightest kind against it. And if you see any such reason, I pray you instantly to banish my letter from your thoughts.

It seems to me probable that some narrative of their ten years' suffering will, somehow or other, sooner or later, be by some of them laid before the English people. The just interest and indignation alive here, will (I suppose) elicit it. False narratives and garbled stories will, in any case, of a certainty get about. If the true history of the matter is to be told, I have that sympathy with them and respect for them which would, all other considerations apart, render it unspeakably gratifying to me to be the means of its diffusion. What I desire to lay before them is simply this. If for my new successor to "Household Words" a narrative of their ten years' trial could be written, I would take any conceivable pains to have it rendered into English, and presented in the sincerest and best way to a very large and comprehensive audience. It should be published exactly as you might think best for them, and remunerated in any way that you might think generous and right. They want no mouthpiece and no introducer, but perhaps they might have no objection to be associated with an English writer, who is possibly not unknown to them by some general reputation, and who cer-

tainly would be animated by a strong public and private respect for their honour, spirit, and unmerited misfortunes. This is the whole matter; assuming that such a thing is to be done, I long for the privilege of helping to do it. These gentlemen might consider it an independent means of making money, and I should be delighted to pay the money.

In my absence from town, my friend and sub-editor, Mr. Wills (to whom I had expressed my feeling on the subject), has seen, I think, three of the gentlemen together. But as I hear, returning home to-night, that they are in your good hands, and as nobody can be a better judge than you of anything that concerns them, I at once decide to write to you and to take no other step whatever. Forgive me for the trouble I have occasioned you in the reading of this letter, and never think of it again if you think that by pursuing it you would cause them an instant's uneasiness.

Believe me, very faithfully yours.

Mr.
Antonio
Panizzi.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Tuesday, March 15th, 1859.*

MY DEAR PANIZZI,

Let me thank you heartily for your kind and prompt letter. I am really and truly sensible of your friendliness.

I have not heard from Higgins, but of course I am ready to serve on the Committee.

Always faithfully yours.

Mr. B. W.
Procter.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Saturday, March 19th, 1859.*

MY DEAR PROCTER,

I think the songs are simply ADMIRABLE! and I have no doubt of this being a popular feature in "All

the Year Round." I would not omit the sexton, and I would not omit the spinners and weavers; and I would omit the hack-writers, and (I think) the alderman; but I am not so clear about the chorister. The pastoral I a little doubt finding audience for; but I am not at all sure yet that my doubt is well founded.

Had I not better send them all to the printer, and let you have proofs kept by you for publishing? I shall not have to make up the first number of "All the Year Round" until early in April. I don't like to send the manuscript back, and I never do like to do so when I get anything that I know to be thoroughly, soundly, and unquestionably good. I am hard at work upon my story, and expect a magnificent start. With hearty thanks,

Ever yours affectionately.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, TAVISTOCK SQUARE, LONDON, W.C.,

Tuesday, March 29th, 1859.

Mr.
Edmund
Yates.

MY DEAR EDMUND,

1. I think that no one seeing the place can well doubt that my house at Gad's Hill is the place for the letter-box. The wall is accessible by all sorts and conditions of men, on the bold high road, and the house altogether is the great landmark of the whole neighbourhood. Captain Goldsmith's *house* is up a lane considerably off the high road; but he has a garden *wall* abutting on the road itself.

2. "The Pic-Nic Papers" were originally sold to Colburn, for the benefit of the widow of Mr. Macrone, of St. James's Square, publisher, deceased. Two volumes were contributed—of course gratuitously—by writers who had had transactions with Macrone. Mr.

Colburn, wanting three volumes in all for trade purposes, added a third, consisting of an American reprint. Of that volume I didn't know, and don't know, anything. The other two I edited, gratuitously as aforesaid, and wrote the Lamplighter's story in. It was all done many years ago. There was a preface originally, delicately setting forth how the book came to be.

3. I suppose——to be, as Mr. Samuel Weller expresses it somewhere in „Pickwick,” “ravin' mad with the consciousness o' willany.” Under their advertisement in *The Times* to-day, you will see, without a word of comment, the shorthand writer's verbatim report of the judgment. Ever faithfully.

Mr.
Antonio
Panizzi.

“ALL THE YEAR ROUND” OFFICE, *Thursday, April 7th, 1859.*

MY DEAR PANIZZI,

If you don't know, I think you should know that a number of letters are passing through the post-office, purporting to be addressed to the charitable by “Italian Exiles in London,” asking for aid to raise a fund for a tribute to “London's Lord Mayor,” in grateful recognition of the reception of the Neapolitan exiles. I know this to be the case, and have no doubt in my own mind that the whole thing is an imposture and a “do.” The letters are signed “Gratitudine Italiana.”

Ever faithfully yours.

Miss
White.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, TAVISTOCK SQUARE, LONDON, W.C.,

Monday, April 18th, 1859.

MY DEAR LOTTY,

This is merely a notice to you that I must positively insist on your getting well, strong, and into good

spirits, with the least possible delay. Also, that I look forward to seeing you at Gad's Hill sometime in the summer, staying with the girls, and heartlessly putting down the Plorn. You know that there is no appeal from the Plorn's inimitable father. What *he* says must be done. Therefore I send you my love (which please take care of), and my commands (which please obey).

Ever your affectionate.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, TAVISTOCK SQUARE, LONDON, W.C.,

Tuesday, May 31st, 1859.

The Hon.
Mrs.
Watson.

MY DEAR MRS. WATSON,

You surprise me by supposing that there is ever latent a defiant and roused expression in the undersigned lamb! Apart from this singular delusion of yours, and wholly unaccountable departure from your usual accuracy in all things, your satisfaction with the portrait is a great pleasure to me. It has received every conceivable pains at Frith's hands, and ought on his account to be good. It is a little too much (to my thinking) as if my next-door neighbour were my deadly foe, uninsured, and I had just received tidings of his house being afire; otherwise very good.

I cannot tell you how delighted we shall be if you would come to Gad's Hill. You should see some charming woods and a rare old castle, and you should have such a snug room looking over a Kentish prospect, with every facility in it for pondering on the beauties of its master's beard! *Do* come, but you positively *must not* come and go on the same day.

We retreat there on Monday, and shall be there all the summer.

My small boy is perfectly happy at Southsea, and

likes the school very much. I had the finest letter two or three days ago, from another of my boys—Frank Jeffrey—at Hamburg. In this wonderful epistle he says: “Dear papa, I write to tell you that I have given up all thoughts of being a doctor. My conviction that I shall never get over my stammering is the cause; all professions are barred against me. The only thing I should like to be is a gentleman farmer, either at the Cape, in Canada, or Australia. With my passage paid, fifteen pounds, a horse, and a rifle, I could go two or three hundred miles up country, sow grain, buy cattle, and in time be very comfortable.”

Considering the consequences of executing the little commission by the next steamer, I perceived that the first consequence of the fifteen pounds would be that he would be robbed of it—of the horse, that it would throw him—and of the rifle, that it would blow his head off; which probabilities I took the liberty of mentioning, as being against the scheme. With best love from all,

Ever believe me, my dear Mrs. Watson,
Your faithful and affectionate.

Mrs.
White.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Sunday, June 5th, 1859.*

MY DEAR MRS. WHITE,

I do not write to you this morning because I have anything to say—I well know where your consolation is set, and to what beneficent figure your thoughts are raised—but simply because you are so much in my mind that it is a relief to send you and dear White my love. You are always in our hearts and on our lips. May the great God comfort you! You know that Mary and Katie are coming on Thursday. They

will bring dear Lotty what she little needs with you by her side—love; and I hope their company will interest and please her. There is nothing that they, or any of us, would not do for her. She is a part of us all, and has belonged to us, as well as to you, these many years.

Ever your affectionate and faithful.

GAD'S HILL, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,

Monday, June 11th, 1859.

Miss
Dickens.

MY DEAREST MAMIE,

On Saturday night I found, very much to my surprise and pleasure, the photograph on my table at Tavistock House. It is not a very pleasant or cheerful presentation of my daughters; but it is wonderfully like for all that, and in some details remarkably good. When I came home here yesterday I tried it in the large Townshend stereoscope, in which it shows to great advantage. It is in the little stereoscope at present on the drawing-room table. One of the balustrades of the destroyed old Rochester bridge has been (very nicely) presented to me by the contractor for the works, and has been duly stonemasoned and set up on the lawn behind the house. I have ordered a sundial for the top of it, and it will be a very good object indeed. The Plorn is highly excited to-day by reason of an institution which he tells me (after questioning George) is called the "Cobb, or Bodderin," holding a festival at The Falstaff. He is possessed of some vague information that they go to Higham Church, in pursuance of some old usage, and attend service there, and afterwards march round the village. It so far looks probable that they certainly started off at eleven

very spare in numbers, and came back considerably recruited, which looks to me like the difference between going to church and coming to dinner. They bore no end of bright banners and broad sashes, and had a band with a terrific drum, and are now (at half-past two) dining at The Falstaff, partly in the side room on the ground-floor, and partly in a tent improvised this morning. The drum is hung up to a tree in The Falstaff garden, and looks like a tropical sort of gourd. I have presented the band with five shillings, which munificence has been highly appreciated. Ices don't seem to be provided for the ladies in the gallery—I mean the garden; they are prowling about there, endeavouring to peep in at the beef and mutton through the holes in the tent, on the whole, in a debased and degraded manner.

Turk somehow cut his foot in Cobham Lanes yesterday, and Linda hers. They are both lame, and looking at each other. Fancy Mr. Townshend not intending to go for another three weeks, and designing to come down here for a few days—with Henry and Bully—on Wednesday! I wish you could have seen him alone with me on Saturday; he was so extraordinarily earnest and affectionate on my belongings and affairs in general, and not least of all on you and Katie, that he cried in a most pathetic manner, and was so affected that I was obliged to leave him among the flower-pots in the long passage at the end of the dining-room. It was a very good piece of truthfulness and sincerity, especially in one of his years, able to take life so easily.

Mr. and Mrs. Wills are here now (but I daresay you know it from your aunt), and return to town with

me to-morrow morning. We are now going on to the castle. Mrs. Wills was very droll last night, and told me some good stories. My dear, I wish particularly to impress upon you and dear Katie (to whom I send my other best love) that I hope your stay will not be very long. I don't think it very good for either of you, though of course I know that Lotty will be, and must be, and should be the first consideration with you both. I am very anxious to know how you found her and how you are yourself.

Best love to dear Lotty and Mrs. White. The same to Mr. White and Clara. We are always talking about you all.

Ever, dearest Mamie, your affectionate Father.

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,

Thursday, July 7th, 1859.

Rev.
James
White.

MY DEAR WHITE,

I send my heartiest and most affectionate love to Mrs. White and you, and to Clara. You know all that I could add; you have felt it all; let it be unspoken and unwritten—it is expressed with us.

Do you not think that you could all three come here, and stay with us? You and Mrs. White should have your own large room and your own ways, and should be among us when you felt disposed, and never otherwise. I do hope you would find peace here. Can it not be done?

We have talked very much about it among ourselves, and the girls are strong upon it. Think of it—do!

Ever your affectionate.

Mr. John
Forster.

GAD'S HILL, *Thursday Night, Aug. 25th, 1859.*

MY DEAR FORSTER,

Heartily glad to get your letter this morning.

I cannot easily tell you how much interested I am by what you tell me of our brave and excellent friend the Chief Baron, in connection with that ruffian. I followed the case with so much interest, and have followed the miserable knaves and asses who have perverted it since, with so much indignation, that I have often had more than half a mind to write and thank the upright judge who tried him. I declare to God that I believe such a service one of the greatest that a man of intellect and courage can render to society. Of course I saw the beast of a prisoner (with my mind's eye) delivering his cut-and-dried speech, and read in every word of it that no one but the murderer could have delivered or conceived it. Of course I have been driving the girls out of their wits here, by incessantly proclaiming that there needed no medical evidence either way, and that the case was plain without it. Lastly, of course (though a merciful man—because a merciful man I mean), I would hang any Home Secretary (Whig, Tory, Radical, or otherwise) who should step in between that black scoundrel and the gallows. I can not believe—and my belief in all wrong as to public matters is enormous—that such a thing will be done.

I am reminded of Tennyson, by thinking that King Arthur would have made short work of the amiable ——, whom the newspapers strangely delight to make a sort of gentleman of. How fine the "Idylls" are! Lord! what a blessed thing it is to read a man

who can write! I thought nothing could be grander than the first poem till I came to the third; but when I had read the last, it seemed to be absolutely unapproached and unapproachable.

To come to myself. I have written and begged the "All the Year Round" publisher to send you directly four weeks' proofs beyond the current number, that are in type. I hope you will like them. Nothing but the interest of the subject, and the pleasure of striving with the difficulty of the forms of treatment, nothing in the mere way of money, I mean, could also repay the time and trouble of the incessant condensation. But I set myself the little task of making a *picturesque* story, rising in every chapter with characters true to nature, but whom the story itself should express, more than they should express themselves, by dialogue. I mean, in other words, that I fancied a story of incident might be written, in place of the bestiality that *is* written under that pretence, pounding the characters out in its own mortar, and beating their own interests out of them. If you could have read the story all at once, I hope you wouldn't have stopped halfway.

As to coming to your retreat, my dear Forster, think how helpless I am. I am not well yet. I have an instinctive feeling that nothing but the sea will restore me, and I am planning to go and work at Ballard's, at Broadstairs, from next Wednesday to Monday. I generally go to town on Monday afternoon. All Tuesday I am at the office, on Wednesday I come back here, and go to work again. I don't leave off till Monday comes round once more. I am fighting to get my story done by the first week in

October. On the 10th of October I am going away to read for a fortnight at Ipswich, Norwich, Oxford, Cambridge, and a few other places. Judge what my spare time is just now!

I am very much surprised and very sorry to find from the enclosed that Elliotson has been ill. I never heard a word of it.

Georgy sends best love to you and to Mrs. Forster, so do I, so does Plorn, so does Frank. The girls are, for five days, with the Whites at Ramsgate. It is raining, intensely hot, and stormy. Eighteen creatures, like little tortoises, have dashed in at the window and fallen on the paper since I began this paragraph (that was one!). I am a wretched sort of creature in my way, but it is a way that gets on somehow. And all ways have the same finger-post at the head of them, and at every turning in them.

Ever affectionately.

Miss
Dickens
and Miss
Katie
Dickens.

ALBION, BROADSTAIRS, *Friday, Sept. 2nd, 1859.*

MY DEAREST MAMIE AND KATIE,

I have been "moved" here, and am now (Ballard having added to the hotel a house we lived in three years) in our old dining-room and sitting-room, and our old drawing-room as a bedroom. My cold is so bad, both in my throat and my chest, that I can't bathe in the sea; Tom Collin dissuaded me—thought it "bad"—but I get a heavy shower-bath at Mrs. Crampton's every morning. The baths are still hers and her husband's, but they have retired and live in "Nuckells"—are going to give a stained-glass window, value three hundred pounds, to St. Peter's Church. Tom Collin is of opinion that the Miss Dickenses has

grewed two fine young women—leastwise, asking pardon, ladies. An evangelical family of most disagreeable girls prowl about here and trip people up with tracts, which they put in the paths with stones upon them to keep them from blowing away. Charles Collins and I having seen a bill yesterday—about a mesmeric young lady who did feats, one of which was set forth in the bill, in a line by itself, as

THE RIGID LEGS,

—were overpowered with curiosity, and resolved to go. It came off in the Assembly Room, now more exquisitely desolate than words can describe. Eighteen shillings was the “take.” Behind a screen among the company, we heard mysterious gurglings of water before the entertainment began, and then a slippery sound which occasioned me to whisper C. C. (who laughed in the most ridiculous manner), “Soap.” It proved to be the young lady washing herself. She must have been wonderfully dirty, for she took a world of trouble, and didn’t come out clean after all—in a wretched dirty muslin frock, with blue ribbons. She was the alleged mesmeriser, and a boy who distributed bills the alleged mesmerised. It was a most preposterous imposition, but more ludicrous than any poor sight I ever saw. The boy is clearly out of pantomime, and when he pretended to be in the mesmeric state, made the company back by going in among them head over heels, backwards, half-a-dozen times, in a most insupportable way. The pianist had struck; and the manner in which the lecturer implored “some lady” to play a “polker,” and the manner in which no lady would; and in which the few ladies

who were there sat with their hats on, and the elastic under their chins, as if it were going to blow, is never to be forgotten. I have been writing all the morning, and am going for a walk to Ramsgate. This is a beast of a letter, but I am not well, and have been addling my head.

Ever, dear Girls, your affectionate Father.

Mr. W.
Wilkie
Collins.

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,

Friday Night, Sept. 16th, 1859.

MY DEAR WILKIE,

Just a word to say that I have received yours, and that I look forward to the reunion on Thursday, when I hope to have the satisfaction of recounting to you the plot of a play that has been laid before me for commending advice.

Ditto to what you say respecting the *Great Eastern*. I went right up to London Bridge by the boat that day, on purpose that I might pass her. I thought her the ugliest and most unshiplike thing these eyes ever beheld. I wouldn't go to sea in her, shiver my ould timbers and rouse me up with a monkey's tail (man-of-war metaphor), not to chuck a biscuit into Davy Jones's weather eye, and see double with my own old toplights.

Turk has been so good as to produce from his mouth, for the wholesome consternation of the family, eighteen feet of worm. When he had brought it up, he seemed to think it might be turned to account in the housekeeping and was proud. Pony has kicked a shaft off the cart, and is to be sold. Why don't you buy her? she'd never kick with you.

Barber's opinion is, that them fruit-trees, one and

all, is touchwood, and not fit for burning at any gentleman's fire; also that the stocking of this here garden is worth less than nothing, because you wouldn't have to grub up nothing, and something takes a man to do it at three-and-sixpence a day. Was "left desponding" by your reporter.

I have had immense difficulty to find a man for the stable-yard here. Barber having at last engaged one this morning, I enquired if he had a decent hat for driving in, to which Barber returned this answer:

"Why, sir, not to deceive you, that man flatly say that he never have wore that article since man he was!"

I am consequently fortified into my room, and am afraid to go out to look at him. Love from all.

Ever affectionately.

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,

Saturday, Oct. 15th, 1859.

Monsieur
Regnier.

MY DEAR REGNIER,

You will receive by railway parcel the proof-sheets of a story of mine, that has been for some time in progress in my weekly journal, and that will be published in a complete volume about the middle of November. Nobody but Forster has yet seen the latter portions of it, or will see them until they are published. I want you to read it for two reasons. Firstly, because I hope it is the best story I have written. Secondly, because it treats of a very remarkable time in France; and I should very much like to know what you think of its being dramatised for a French theatre. If you should think it likely to be done, I should be glad to take some steps towards having it well done.

The story is an extraordinary success here, and I think the end of it is certain to make a still greater sensation.

Don't trouble yourself to write to me, *mon ami*, until you shall have had time to read the proofs. Remember, they are *proofs*, and *private*; the latter chapters will not be before the public for five or six weeks to come.

With kind regards to Madame Regnier, in which my daughters and their aunt unite,

Believe me, ever faithfully yours.

P.S.—The story (I daresay you have not seen any of it yet) is called “A Tale of Two Cities.”

Mr. Frank
Stone,
A.R.A.

PETERBOROUGH, *Wednesday Evening, Oct. 19th, 1859.*

MY DEAR STONE,

We had a splendid rush last night—exactly as we supposed, with the pressure on the two shillings, of whom we turned a crowd away. They were a far finer audience than on the previous night; I think the finest I have ever read to. They took every word of the “Dombey” in quite an amazing manner, and after the child's death, paused a little, and then set up a shout that it did one good to hear. Mrs. Gamp then set in with a roar, which lasted until I had done. I think everybody for the time forgot everything but the matter in hand. It was as fine an instance of thorough absorption in a fiction as any of us are likely to see ever again.

—— (in an exquisite red mantle), accompanied by her sister (in another exquisite red mantle) and by the deaf lady, (who leaned a black head-dress, exactly

like an old-fashioned tea-urn without the top, against the wall), was charming. HE couldn't get at her on account of the pressure. HE tried to peep at her from the side door, but she (ha, ha, ha!) was unconscious of his presence. I read to her, and goaded him to madness. He is just sane enough to send his kindest regards.

This is a place which—except the cathedral, with the loveliest front I ever saw—is like the back door to some other place. It is, I should hope, the deadeast and most utterly inert little town in the British dominions. The magnates have taken places, and the bookseller is of opinion that “such is the determination to do honour to Mr. Dickens, that the doors *must* be opened half an hour before the appointed time.” You will picture to yourself Arthur's quiet indignation at this, and the manner in which he remarked to me at dinner, “that he turned away twice Peterborough last night.”

A very pretty room—though a Corn Exchange—and a room we should have been glad of at Cambridge, as it is large, bright, and cheerful, and wonderfully well lighted.

The difficulty of getting to Bradford from here to-morrow, at any time convenient to us, turned out to be so great, that we are all going in for Leeds (only three-quarters of an hour from Bradford) to-night after the reading, at a quarter-past eleven. We are due at Leeds a quarter before three.

So no more at present from,

Yours affectionately.

Mr. W. R. TAVISTOCK HOUSE, TAVISTOCK SQUARE, LONDON, W.C.,
Scul-
thorpe.

Thursday, Nov. 10th, 1859.

DEAR SIR,

Judgment must go by default. I have not a word to plead against Dodson and Fogg. I am without any defence to the action; and therefore, as law goes, ought to win it.

Seriously, the date of your hospitable note disturbs my soul. But I have been incessantly writing in Kent and reading in all sorts of places, and have done nothing in my own personal character these many months; and now I come to town and our friend* is away! Let me take that defaulting miscreant into council when he comes back.

Faithfully yours.

Monsieur TAVISTOCK HOUSE, TAVISTOCK SQUARE, LONDON, W.C.,
Regnier.

Wednesday, Nov. 16th, 1859.

MY DEAR REGNIER,

I send you ten thousand thanks for your kind and explicit letter. What I particularly wished to ascertain from you was, whether it is likely the Censor would allow such a piece to be played in Paris. In the case of its being likely, then I wished to have the piece as well done as possible, and would even have proposed to come to Paris to see it rehearsed. But I very much doubted whether the general subject would not be objectionable to the Government, and what you write with so much sagacity and with such care convinces me at once that its representation would be prohibited. Therefore I altogether abandon

* Mr. Edmund Yates.

and relinquish the idea. But I am just as heartily and cordially obliged to you for your interest and friendship, as if the book had been turned into a play five hundred times. I again thank you ten thousand times, and am quite sure that you are right. I only hope you will forgive my causing you so much trouble, after your hard work.

My girls and Georgina send their kindest regards to Madame Regnier and to you. My Gad's Hill house (I think I omitted to tell you, in reply to your enquiry) is on the very scene of Falstaff's robbery. There is a little *cabaret* at the roadside, still called The Sir John Falstaff. And the country, in all its general features, is, at this time, what it was in Shakespeare's. I hope you will see the house before long. It is really a pretty place, and a good residence for an English writer, is it not?

Macready, we are all happy to hear from himself, is going to leave the dreary tomb in which he lives, at Sherborne, and to remove to Cheltenham, a large and handsome place, about four or five hours' railway journey from London, where his poor girls will at least see and hear some life. Madame Céleste was with me yesterday, wishing to dramatise "A Tale of Two Cities" for the Lyceum, after bringing out the Christmas pantomime. I gave her my permission and the book; but I fear that her company (troupe) is a very poor one.

This is all the news I have, except (which is no news at all) that I feel as if I had not seen you for fifty years, and that

I am ever your attached and faithful Friend.

Mr. T.
Longman.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Monday, Nov. 28th, 1859.*

MY DEAR LONGMAN,

I am very anxious to present to you, with the earnest hope that you will hold him in your remembrance, young Mr. Marcus Stone, son of poor Frank Stone, who died suddenly but a little week ago. You know, I daresay, what a start this young man made in the last exhibition, and what a favourable notice his picture attracted. He wishes to make an additional opening for himself in the illustration of books. He is an admirable draughtsman, has a most dexterous hand, a charming sense of grace and beauty, and a capital power of observation. These qualities in him I know well of my own knowledge. He is in all things modest, punctual, and right; and I would answer for him, if it were needful, with my head.

If you will put anything in his way, you will do it a second time, I am certain.

Faithfully yours always.

1860.

NARRATIVE.

THIS winter was the last spent at Tavistock House. Charles Dickens had for some time been inclining to the idea of making his home altogether at Gad's Hill, giving up his London house, and taking a furnished house for the sake of his daughters for a few months of the London season. And, as his daughter Kate was to be married this summer to Mr. Charles Collins, this intention was confirmed and carried out. He made arrangements for the sale of Tavistock House

to Mr. Davis, a Jewish gentleman, and he gave up possession of it in September. Up to this time Gad's Hill had been furnished merely as a temporary summer residence—pictures, library, and all best furniture being left in the London house. He now set about beautifying and making Gad's Hill thoroughly comfortable and homelike. And there was not a year afterwards, up to the year of his death, that he did not make some addition or improvement to it. He also furnished, as a private residence, a sitting-room and some bedrooms at his office in Wellington Street, to be used, when there was no house in London, as occasional town quarters by himself, his daughter, and sister-in-law.

He began in this summer his occasional papers for "All the Year Round," which he called "The Uncommercial Traveller," and which were continued at intervals in his journal until 1869.

In the autumn of this year he began another story, to be published weekly in "All the Year Round." The letter to Mr. Forster, which we give, tells him of this beginning and gives him the name of the book. The first number of "Great Expectations" appeared on the 1st December. The Christmas number, this time, was written jointly by himself and Mr. Wilkie Collins. The scene was laid at Clovelly, and they made a journey together into Devonshire and Cornwall, for the purpose of this story, in November.

The letter to Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton is, unfortunately, the only one we have as yet been able to procure. The present Lord Lytton, the Viceroy of India, has kindly endeavoured to help us even during his absence from England. But it was found to be

impossible without his own assistance to make the necessary search among his father's papers. And he has promised us that, on his return, he will find and lend to us, many letters from Charles Dickens, which are certainly in existence, to his distinguished fellow-writer and great friend. We hope, therefore, it may be possible for us at some future time to be able to publish these letters, as well as those addressed to the present Lord Lytton (when he was Mr. Robert Lytton, otherwise "Owen Meredith," and a frequent contributor to "Household Words" and "All the Year Round)."

We have the same hope with regard to letters addressed to Sir Henry Layard, at present Ambassador at Constantinople, which, of course, for the same reason, cannot be lent to us at the present time.

We give a letter to Mr. Forster on one of his books on the Commonwealth, the "Impeachment of the Five Members;" which, as with other letters which we are glad to publish on the subject of Mr. Forster's own works, was not used by himself for obvious reasons.

A letter to his daughter Mamie (who, after her sister's marriage, paid a visit with her dear friends the White family to Scotland, where she had a serious illness) introduces a recent addition to the family, who became an important member of it, and one to whom Charles Dickens was very tenderly attached—her little white Pomeranian dog "Mrs. Bouncer" (so called after the celebrated lady of that name in "Box and Cox"). It is quite necessary to make this formal introduction of the little pet animal (who lived to be a very old dog and died in 1874), because future

letters to his daughter contain constant references and messages to "Mrs. Bouncer," which would be quite unintelligible without this explanation. "Boy," also referred to in this letter, was his daughter's horse. The little dog and the horse were gifts to Mamie Dickens from her friends Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Smith, and the sister of the latter, Miss Craufurd.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Monday, Jan. 2nd, 1860.* Mr. W. C.
Macready.

MY DEAREST MACREADY,

A happy New Year to you, and many happy years! I cannot tell you how delighted I was to receive your Christmas letter, or with what pleasure I have received Forster's emphatic accounts of your health and spirits. But when was I ever wrong? And when did I not tell you that you were an impostor in pretending to grow older as the rest of us do, and that you had a secret of your own for reversing the usual process! It happened that I read at Cheltenham a couple of months ago, and that I have rarely seen a place that so attracted my fancy. I had never seen it before. Also I believe the character of its people to have greatly changed for the better. All sorts of long-visaged prophets had told me that they were dull, stolid, slow, and I don't know what more that is disagreeable. I found them exactly the reverse in all respects; and I saw an amount of beauty there—well—that is not to be more specifically mentioned to you young fellows.

Katie dined with us yesterday, looking wonderfully well, and singing "Excelsior" with a certain dramatic fire in her, whereof I seem to remember having seen sparks afore now. Etc. etc. etc.

With kindest love from all at home to all with you,

Ever, my dear Macready, your most affectionate.

Mr. W.
Wilkie
Collins.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, TAVISTOCK SQUARE, LONDON, W.C.,

Saturday Night, Jan. 7th, 1860.

MY DEAR WILKIE,

I have read this book with great care and attention. There cannot be a doubt that it is a very great advance on all your former writing, and most especially in respect of tenderness. In character it is excellent. Mr. Fairlie as good as the lawyer, and the lawyer as good as he. Mr. Vesey and Miss Halcombe, in their different ways, equally meritorious. Sir Percival, also, is most skilfully shown, though I doubt (you see what small points I come to) whether any man ever showed uneasiness by hand or foot without being forced by nature to show it in his face too. The story is very interesting, and the writing of it admirable.

I seem to have noticed, here and there, that the great pains you take express themselves a trifle too much, and you know that I always contest your disposition to give an audience credit for nothing, which necessarily involves the forcing of points on their attention, and which I have always observed them to resent when they find it out—as they always will and do. But on turning to the book again, I find it difficult to take out an instance of this. It rather belongs to your habit of thought and manner of going about the work. Perhaps I express my meaning best when I say that the three people who write the narratives in these proofs have a DISSECTIVE property in common, which is essentially not theirs but yours;

and that my own effort would be to strike more of what is got *that way* out of them by collision with one another, and by the working of the story.

You know what an interest I have felt in your powers from the beginning of our friendship, and how very high I rate them? *I* know that this is an admirable book, and that it grips the difficulties of the weekly portion and throws them in masterly style. No one else could do it half so well. I have stopped in every chapter to notice some instance of ingenuity, or some happy turn of writing; and I am absolutely certain that you never did half so well yourself.

So go on and prosper, and let me see some more, when you have enough (for your own satisfaction) to show me. I think of coming in to back you up if I can get an idea for my series of gossiping papers. One of these days, please God, we may do a story together; I have very odd half-formed notions, in a mist, of something that might be done that way.

Ever affectionately.

11, WELLINGTON STREET, NORTH STRAND, LONDON, W.C.,
Wednesday, May 2nd, 1860.

Mr. John
Forster.

MY DEAR FORSTER,

It did not occur to me in reading your most excellent, interesting, and remarkable book, that it could with any reason be called one-sided. If Clarendon had never written his "History of the Rebellion," then I can understand that it might be. But just as it would be impossible to answer an advocate who had misstated the merits of a case for his own purpose, without, in the interests of truth, and not of the other side merely, re-stating the merits and showing

them in their real form, so I cannot see the practicability of telling what you had to tell without in some sort championing the misrepresented side, and I think that you don't do that as an advocate, but as a judge.

The evidence has been suppressed and coloured, and the judge goes through it and puts it straight. It is not *his* fault if it all goes one way and tends to one plain conclusion. Nor is it his fault that it goes the further when it is laid out straight, or seems to do so, because it was so knotted and twisted up before.

I can understand any man's, and particularly Carlyle's, having a lingering respect that does not like to be disturbed for those (in the best sense of the word) loyal gentlemen of the country who went with the king and were so true to him. But I don't think Carlyle sufficiently considers that the great mass of those gentlemen *didn't know the truth*, that it was a part of their loyalty to believe what they were told on the king's behalf, and that it is reasonable to suppose that the king was too artful to make known to *them* (especially after failure) what were very acceptable designs to the desperate soldiers of fortune about Whitehall. And it was to me a curious point of adventitious interest arising out of your book, to reflect on the probability of their having been as ignorant of the real scheme in Charles's head, as their descendants and followers down to this time, and to think with pity and admiration that they believed the cause to be so much better than it was. This is a notion I was anxious to have expressed in our account of the

book in these pages. For I don't suppose Clarendon or any other such man to sit down and tell posterity something that he has not "tried on" in his own time. Do you?

In the whole narrative I saw nothing anywhere to which I demurred. I admired it all, went with it all, and was proud of my friend's having written it all. I felt it to be all square and sound and right, and to be of enormous importance in these times. Firstly, to the people who (like myself) are so sick of the shortcomings of representative government as to have no interest in it. Secondly, to the humbugs at Westminster who have come down—a long, long way—from those men, as you know. When the Great Remonstrance came out, I was in the thick of my story, and was always busy with it; but I am very glad I didn't read it then, as I shall read it now to much better purpose. All the time I was at work on the "Two Cities," I read no books but such as had the air of the time in them.

To return for a final word to the Five Members. I thought the marginal references overdone. Here and there, they had a comical look to me for that reason, and reminded me of shows and plays where everything is in the bill.

Lastly, I should have written to you—as I had a strong inclination to do, and ought to have done, immediately after reading the book—but for a weak reason; of all things in the world I have lost heart in one—I hope no other—I cannot, times out of calculation, make up my mind to write a letter.

Ever, my dear Forster, affectionately yours.

M. de
Cerjat.

TAVISTOCK HOUSE, *Thursday, May 3rd, 1860.*

MY DEAR CERJAT,

The date of this letter would make me horribly ashamed of myself, if I didn't know that *you* know how difficult letter-writing is to one whose trade it is to write.

You asked me on Christmas Eve about my children. My second daughter is going to be married in the course of the summer to Charles Collins, the brother of Wilkie Collins, the novelist. The father was one of the most famous painters of English green lanes and coast pieces. He was bred an artist; is a writer, too, and does "The Eye Witness," in "All the Year Round." He is a gentleman, accomplished, and amiable. My eldest daughter has not yet started any conveyance on the road to matrimony (that I know of); but it is likely enough that she will, as she is very agreeable and intelligent. They are both very pretty. My eldest boy, Charley, has been in Barings' house for three or four years, and is now going to Hong Kong, strongly backed up by Barings, to buy tea on his own account, as a means of forming a connection and seeing more of the practical part of a merchant's calling, before starting in London for himself. His brother Frank (Jeffrey's godson) I have just recalled from France and Germany, to come and learn business, and qualify himself to join his brother on his return from the Celestial Empire. The next boy, Sydney Smith, is designed for the navy, and is in training at Portsmouth, awaiting his nomination. He is about three foot high, with the biggest eyes ever seen, and is

known in the Portsmouth parts as "Young Dickens, who can do everything."

Another boy is at school in France; the youngest of all has a private tutor at home. I have forgotten the second in order, who is in India. He went out as ensign of a non-existent native regiment, got attached to the 42nd Highlanders, one of the finest regiments in the Queen's service; has remained with them ever since, and got made a lieutenant by the chances of the rebellious campaign, before he was eighteen. Miss Hogarth, always Miss Hogarth, is the guide, philosopher, and friend of all the party, and a very close affection exists between her and the girls. I doubt if she will ever marry. I don't know whether to be glad of it or sorry for it.

I have laid down my pen and taken a long breath after writing this family history. I have also considered whether there are any more children, and I don't think there are. If I should remember two or three others presently, I will mention them in a post-script.

We think Townshend looking a little the worse for the winter, and we perceive Bully to be decidedly old upon his legs, and of a most diabolical turn of mind. When they first arrived the weather was very dark and cold, and kept them indoors. It has since turned very warm and bright, but with a dusty and sharp east wind. They are still kept indoors by this change, and I begin to wonder what change will let them out. Townshend dines with us every Sunday. You may be sure that we always talk of you and yours, and drink to you heartily.

Public matters here are thought to be rather im-

proving; the deep mistrust of the gentleman in Paris being counteracted by the vigorous state of preparation into which the nation is getting. You will have observed, of course, that we establish a new defaulter in respect of some great trust, about once a quarter. The last one, the cashier of a City bank, is considered to have distinguished himself greatly, a quarter of a million of money being high game.

No, my friend, I have not shouldered my rifle yet, but I should do so on more pressing occasion. Every other man in the row of men I know—if they were all put in a row—is a volunteer though. There is a tendency rather to overdo the wearing of the uniform, but that is natural enough in the case of the youngest men. The turn-out is generally very creditable indeed. At the ball they had (in a perfectly unventilated building), their new leather belts and pouches smelt so fearfully that it was, as my eldest daughter said, like shoemaking in a great prison. She, consequently, distinguished herself by fainting away in the most inaccessible place in the whole structure, and being brought out (horizontally) by a file of volunteers, like some slain daughter of Albion whom they were carrying into the street to rouse the indignant valour of the populace.

Lord, my dear Cerjat, when I turn to that page of your letter where you write like an ancient sage in whom the fire has paled into a meek-eyed state of coolness and virtue, I half laugh and half cry! *You* old! *You* a sort of hermit? Boh! Get out.

With this comes my love and all our loves, to you and Mrs. Cerjat, and your daughter. I add my special and particular to the sweet "singing cousin." When

shall you and I meet, and where? Must I come to see Townshend? I begin to think so.

Ever, my dear Cerjat, your affectionate and faithful.

GAD'S HILL, Tuesday, June 5th, 1860.

Sir Edward
Bulwer
Lytton.

MY DEAR BULWER LYTTON,

I am very much interested and gratified by your letter concerning "A Tale of Two Cities." I do not quite agree with you on two points, but that is no deduction from my pleasure.

In the first place, although the surrender of the feudal privileges (on a motion seconded by a nobleman of great rank) was the occasion of a sentimental scene, I see no reason to doubt, but on the contrary, many reasons to believe, that some of these privileges had been used to the frightful oppression of the peasant, quite as near to the time of the Revolution as the doctor's narrative, which, you will remember, dates long before the Terror. And surely when the new philosophy was the talk of the salons and the slang of the hour, it is not unreasonable or unallowable to suppose a nobleman wedded to the old cruel ideas, and representing the time going out, as his nephew represents the time coming in; as to the condition of the peasant in France generally at that day, I take it that if anything be certain on earth it is certain that it was intolerable. No *ex post facto* enquiries and provings by figures will hold water, surely, against the tremendous testimony of men living at the time.

There is a curious book printed at Amsterdam, written to make out no case whatever, and tiresome enough in its literal dictionary-like minuteness, scattered up and down the pages of which is full authority

for my marquis. This is "Mercier's Tableau de Paris." Rousseau is the authority for the peasant's shutting up his house when he had a bit of meat. The tax-taker was the authority for the wretched creature's impoverishment.

I am not clear, and I never have been clear, respecting that canon of fiction which forbids the interposition of accident in such a case as Madame Defarge's death. Where the accident is inseparable from the passion and emotion of the character, where it is strictly consistent with the whole design, and arises out of some culminating proceeding on the part of the character which the whole story has led up to, it seems to me to become, as it were, an act of divine justice. And when I use Miss Pross (though this is quite another question) to bring about that catastrophe, I have the positive intention of making that half-comic intervention a part of the desperate woman's failure, and of opposing that mean death—instead of a desperate one in the streets, which she wouldn't have minded—to the dignity of Carton's wrong or right; this *was* the design, and seemed to be in the fitness of things.

Now, as to the reading. I am sorry to say that it is out of the question this season. I have had an attack of rheumatism—quite a stranger to me—which remains hovering about my left side, after having doubled me up in the back, and which would disable me from standing for two hours. I have given up all dinners and town engagements, and come to my little Falstaff House here, sensible of the necessity of country training all through the summer. Smith would have proposed any appointment to see you on the subject, but he has been dreadfully ill with tic. Whenever I

read in London, I will gladly put a night aside for your purpose, and we will plot to connect your name with it, and give it some speciality. But this could not be before Christmas time, as I should not be able to read sooner, for in the hot weather it would be useless. Let me hear from you about this when you have considered it. It would greatly diminish the expenses, remember.

Ever affectionately and faithfully.

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,

Sunday, June 17th, 1860.

The
Lord John
Russell.

MY DEAR LORD JOHN RUSSELL,

I cannot thank you enough for your kind note and its most welcome enclosure. My sailor-boy comes home from Portsmouth to-morrow, and will be overjoyed. His masters have been as anxious for getting his nomination as though it were some distinction for themselves.

Ever your faithful and obliged.

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,

Wednesday, Aug. 8th, 1860.

The Earl of
Carlisle.

MY DEAR LORD CARLISLE,

Coming back here after an absence of three days in town, I find your kind and cordial letter lying on my table. I heartily thank you for it, and highly esteem it. I understand that the article on the spirits to which you refer was written by —— (he played an Irish porter in one scene of Bulwer's comedy at Devonshire House). Between ourselves, I think it must be taken with a few grains of salt, imperial measure. The experiences referred to "came off" at ——, where the spirit of —— (among an extensive and miscel-

laneous bodiless circle) *dines* sometimes! Mr. ———, the high priest of the mysteries, I have some considerable reason—derived from two honourable men—for mistrusting. And that some of the disciples are very easy of belief I know.

This is Falstaff's own Gad's Hill, and I live on the top of it. All goes well with me, thank God! I should be thoroughly delighted to see you again, and to show you where the robbery was done. My eldest daughter keeps my house, and it is one I was extraordinarily fond of when a child.

My dear Lord Carlisle, ever affectionately yours.

P.S.—I am prowling about, meditating a new book.

Mr. W. H.
Wills.

OFFICE OF "ALL THE YEAR ROUND,"

Tuesday, Sept. 4th, 1860.

MY DEAR WILLS,

Your description of your sea-castle makes your room here look uncommonly dusty. Likewise the costermongers in the street outside, and the one customer (drunk, with his head on the table) in the Crown Coffee House over the way, in York Street, have an earthy, and, as I may say, a land-lubberly aspect. Cape Horn, to the best of *my* belief, is a tremendous way off, and there are more bricks and cabbage-leaves between this office and that dismal point of land than *you* can possibly imagine.

Coming here from the station this morning, I met, coming from the execution of the Wentworth murderer, such a tide of ruffians as never could have flowed from any point but the gallows. Without any figure of speech it turned one white and sick to behold them.

Tavistock House is cleared to-day, and possession delivered up. I must say that in all things the purchaser has behaved thoroughly well, and that I cannot call to mind any occasion when I have had money dealings with a Christian that have been so satisfactory, considerate, and trusting.

I am ornamented at present with one of my most intensely preposterous and utterly indescribable colds. If you were to make a voyage from Cape Horn to Wellington Street, you would scarcely recognise in the bowed form, weeping eyes, rasped nose, and snivelling wretch whom you would encounter here, the once gay and sparkling, etc. etc.

Everything else here is as quiet as possible. Business reports you receive from Holsworth. Wilkie looked in to-day, going to Gloucestershire for a week. The office is full of discarded curtains and coverings from Tavistock House, which Georgina is coming up this evening to select from and banish. Mary is in raptures with the beauties of Dunkeld, but is not very well in health. The Admiral (Sydney) goes up for his examination to-morrow. If he fails to pass with credit, I will never believe in anybody again, so in that case look out for your own reputation with me.

This is really all the news I have, except that I am lazy, and that Wilkie dines here next Tuesday, in order that we may have a talk about the Christmas number.

I beg to send my kind regard to Mrs. Wills, and to enquire how she likes wearing a hat, which of course she does. I also want to know from her in confidence whether *Crwllm festidiniog llymthll y wodd?*

Yesterday I burnt, in the field at Gad's Hill, the

accumulated letters and papers of twenty years. They sent up a smoke like the genie when he got out of the casket on the seashore; and as it was an exquisite day when I began, and rained very heavily when I finished, I suspect my correspondence of having overcast the face of the heavens.

Ever faithfully.

P.S.—Kind regard to Mr. and Mrs. Novelli.*

I have just sent out for *The Globe*. No news.

Hullah's daughter (an artist) tells me that certain female students have addressed the Royal Academy, entreating them to find a place for their education. I think it a capital move, for which I can do something popular and telling in *The Register*. Adelaide Procter is active in the business, and has a copy of their letter. Will you write to her for that, and anything else she may have about it, telling her that I strongly approve, and want to help them myself?

The Hon.
Mrs.
Watson.

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,

Friday Night, Sept. 14th, 1860.

MY DEAR MRS. WATSON,

I lose no time in answering your letter; and first as to business, the school in the High Town at Boulogne was excellent. The boys all English, the two proprietors an old Eton master and one of the Protestant clergymen of the town. The teaching unusually sound and good. The manner and conduct developed in the boys quite admirable. But I have never seen a gentleman so perfectly acquainted with boy-nature as the Eton master. There was a perfect understanding between him and his charges; nothing pedantic on his

* With whom Mr. and Mrs. Wills were staying at Aberystwith.

part, nothing slavish on their parts. The result was, that either with him or away from him, the boys combined an ease and frankness with a modesty and sense of responsibility that was really above all praise. Alfred went from there to a great school at Wimbledon, where they train for India and the artillery and engineers. Sydney went from there to Mr. Barrow, at Southsea. In both instances the new masters wrote to me of their own accord, bearing quite unsolicited testimony to the merits of the old, and expressing their high recognition of what they had done. These things speak for themselves.

Sydney has just passed his examination as a naval cadet and come home, all eyes and gold buttons. He has twelve days' leave before going on board the training-ship. Katie and her husband are in France, and seem likely to remain there for an indefinite period. Mary is on a month's visit in Scotland; Georgina, Frank, and Plorn are at home here; and we all want Mary and her little dog back again. I have sold Tavistock House, am making this rather complete in its way, and am on the restless eve of beginning a new big book; but mean to have a furnished house in town (in some accessible quarter) from February or so to June. May we meet there.

Your handwriting is always so full of pleasant memories to me, that when I took it out of the post-office at Rochester this afternoon it quite stirred my heart. But we must not think of old times as sad times, or regard them as anything but the fathers and mothers of the present. We must all climb steadily up the mountain after the talking bird, the singing tree, and the yellow water, and must all bear in mind that

the previous climbers who were scared into looking back got turned into black stone.

Mary Boyle was here a little while ago, as affectionate at heart as ever, as young, and as pleasant. Of course we talked often of you. So let me know when you are established in Halfmoon Street, and I shall be truly delighted to come and see you.

For my attachments are strong attachments and never weaken. In right of bygones, I feel as if "all Northamptonshire" belonged to me, as all Northumberland did to Lord Bateman in the ballad. In memory of your warming your feet at the fire in that waste of a waiting-room when I read at Brighton, I have ever since taken that watering-place to my bosom as I never did before. And you and Switzerland are always one to me, and always inseparable.

Charley was heard of yesterday, from Shanghai, going to Japan, intending to meet his brother Walter at Calcutta, and having an idea of beguiling the time between whiles by asking to be taken as an amateur with the English Chinese forces. Everybody caressed him and asked him everywhere, and he seemed to go. With kind regards, my dear Mrs. Watson,

Ever affectionately yours.

Mr.
Edmund
Yates.

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,

Sunday, Sept. 23rd, 1860.

ON THE DEATH OF HIS MOTHER.

MY DEAR E. Y.,

I did not write to you in your bereavement, because I knew that the girls had written to you, and because I instinctively shrunk from making a form of what was so real. *You* knew what a loving and faith-

ful remembrance I always had of your mother as a part of my youth—no more capable of restoration than my youth itself. All the womanly goodness, grace, and beauty of my drama went out with her. To the last I never could hear her voice without emotion. I think of her as of a beautiful part of my own youth, and this dream that we are all dreaming seems to darken.

But it is not to say this that I write now. It comes to the point of my pen in spite of me.

“Holding up the Mirror” is in next week’s number. I have taken out all this funeral part of it. Not because I disliked it (for, indeed, I thought it the best part of the paper), but because it rather grated on me, going over the proof at that time, as a remembrance that would be better reserved a little while. Also because it made rather a mixture of yourself as an individual, with something that does not belong or attach to you as an individual. You can have the MS.; and as a part of a paper describing your own juvenile remembrances of a theatre, there it is, needing no change or adaption.

Ever faithfully.

GAD’S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,

Sunday, Sept. 23rd, 1860.

Miss
Dickens

MY DEAREST MAMIE,

If you had been away from us and ill with anybody in the world but our dear Mrs. White, I should have been in a state of the greatest anxiety and uneasiness about you. But as I know it to be impossible that you could be in kinder or better hands, I was not in the least restless about you, otherwise than as it grieved me to hear of my poor dear girl’s suffering such pain. I hope it is over now for many a long day,

and that you will come back to us a thousand times better in health than you left us.

Don't come back too soon. Take time and get well restored. There is no hurry, the house is not near to-rights yet, and though we all want you, and though Boy wants you, we all (including Boy) deprecate a fatiguing journey being taken too soon.

As to the carpenters, they are absolutely maddening. They are always at work, yet never seem to do anything. Lillie was down on Friday, and said (his eye fixed on Maidstone, and rubbing his hand to conciliate his moody employer) that "he didn't think there would be very much left to do after Saturday, the 29th."

I didn't throw him out of the window. Your aunt tells you all the news, and leaves me no chance of distinguishing myself, I know. You have been told all about my brackets in the drawing-room, all about the glass rescued from the famous stage-wreck of Tavistock House, all about everything here and at the office. The office is really a success. As comfortable, cheerful, and private as anything of the kind can possibly be.

I took the Admiral (but this you know too, no doubt) to Dollond's, the mathematical instrument maker's, last Monday, to buy that part of his outfit. His sextant (which is about the size and shape of a cocked hat), on being applied to his eye, entirely concealed him. Not the faintest vestige of the distinguished officer behind it was perceptible to the human vision. All through the City, people turned round and stared at him with the sort of pleasure people take in a little model. We went on to Chatham this day week, in search of some big man-of-war's-man who should be

under obligation to salute him—unfortunately found none. But this no doubt you know too, and all my news falls flat.

I am driven out of my room by paint, and am writing in the best spare room. The whole prospect is excessively wet; it does not rain now, but yesterday it did tremendously, and it rained very heavily in the night. We are even muddy; and that is saying a great deal in this dry country of chalk and sand. Everywhere the corn is lying out and saturated with wet. The hops (nearly everywhere) look as if they had been burnt.

In my mind's eye I behold Mrs. Bouncer, still with some traces of her late anxiety on her faithful countenance, balancing herself a little unequally on her bow fore-legs, pricking up her ears, with her head on one side, and slightly opening her intellectual nostrils. I send my loving and respectful duty to her.

To dear Mrs. White, and to White, and to Clara, say anything from me that is loving and grateful.

My dearest Mamie,

Ever and ever your most affectionate Father.

OFFICE OF "ALL THE YEAR ROUND,"

Monday Night, Sept. 24th, 1860.

Miss
Hogarth.

MY DEAREST GEORGY,

At the Waterloo station we were saluted with "Hallo! here's Dickens!" from divers naval cadets, and Sir Richard Bromley introduced himself to me, who had his cadet son with him, a friend of Sydney's. We went down together, and the boys were in the closest alliance. Bromley being Accountant-General of the Navy, and having influence on board, got their ham-

mocks changed so that they would be serving side by side, at which they were greatly pleased. The moment we stepped on board, the "Hul-lo! here's Dickens!" was repeated on all sides, and the Admiral (evidently highly popular) shook hands with about fifty of his messmates. Taking Bromley for my model (with whom I fraternised in the most pathetic manner), I gave Sydney a sovereign before stepping over the side. He was as little overcome as it was possible for a boy to be, and stood waving the gold-banded cap as we came ashore in a boat.

There is no denying that he looks very small aboard a great ship, and that a boy must have a strong and decided speciality for the sea to take to such a life. Captain Harris was not on board, but the other chief officers were, and were highly obliging. We went over the ship. I should say that there can be little or no individuality of address to any particular boy, but that they all tumble through their education in a crowded way. The Admiral's servant (I mean our Admiral's) had an idiotic appearance, but perhaps it did him injustice (a mahogany-faced marine by station). The Admiral's washing apparatus is about the size of a muffin-plate, and he could easily live in his chest. The meeting with Bromley was a piece of great good fortune, and the dear old chap could not have been left more happily.

Ever, my dearest Georgy, your most affectionate.

Miss
Power.

OFFICE OF "ALL THE YEAR ROUND,"

Tuesday, Sept. 25th, 1860.

MY DEAR MARGUERITE,

I like the article exceedingly, and think the translations *admirable*—spirited, fresh, bold, and evidently

faithful. I will get the paper into the next number I make up, No. 78. I will send a proof to you for your correction, either next Monday or this day week. Or would you like to come here next Monday and dine with us at five, and go over to Madame Céleste's opening? Then you could correct your paper on the premises, as they drink their beer at the beer-shops.

Some of the introductory remarks on French literature I propose to strike out, as a little too essayical for this purpose, and likely to throw out a large portion of the large audience at starting, as suggesting some very different kind of article. My daring pen shall have imbued its murderous heart with ink before you see the proof.

With kind regards,

Ever affectionately.

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,

Thursday, Oct. 4th, 1860.

Mr. John
Forster.

MY DEAR FORSTER,

It would be a great pleasure to me to come to you, an immense pleasure, and to sniff the sea I love (from the shore); but I fear I must come down one morning and come back at night. I will tell you why.

Last week, I got to work on a new story. I called a council of war at the office on Tuesday. It was perfectly clear that the one thing to be done was, for me to strike in. I have therefore decided to begin a story, the length of the "Tale of Two Cities," on the 1st of December—begin publishing, that is. I must make the most I can out of the book. When I come down, I will bring you the first two or three weekly parts. The name is, "GREAT EXPECTATIONS." I think a good name?

Now the preparations to get ahead, combined with the absolute necessity of my giving a good deal of time to the Christmas number, will tie me to the grindstone pretty tightly. It will be just as much as I can hope to do. Therefore, what I had hoped would be a few days at Eastbourne diminish to a few hours.

I took the Admiral down to Portsmouth. Every maritime person in the town knew him. He seemed to know every boy on board the *Britannia*, and was a tremendous favourite evidently. It was very characteristic of him that they good-naturedly helped him, he being so very small, into his hammock at night. But he couldn't rest in it on these terms, and got out again to learn the right way of getting in independently. Official report stated that "after a few spills, he succeeded perfectly, and went to sleep." He is perfectly happy on board, takes tea with the captain, leads choruses on Saturday nights, and has an immense marine for a servant.

I saw Edmund Yates at the office, and he told me that during all his mother's wanderings of mind, which were almost incessant at last, she never once went back to the old Adelphi days until she was just dying, when he heard her say, in great perplexity: "I can *not* get the words."

Best love to Mrs. Forster.

Ever, my dear Forster, affectionately.

Mr. W.
Wilkie
Collins.

OFFICE OF "ALL THE YEAR ROUND,"

Wednesday, Oct. 24th, 1860.

MY DEAR WILKIE,

I have been down to Brighton to see Forster, and found your letter there on arriving by express this

morning. I also found a letter from Georgina, describing that Mary's horse went down suddenly on a stone, and how Mary was thrown, and had her riding-habit torn to pieces, and has a deep cut just above the knee—fortunately not in the knee itself, which is doing exceedingly well, but which will probably incapacitate her from walking for days and days to come. It is well it was no worse. The accident occurred at Milton, near Gravesend, and they found Mary in a public-house there, wonderfully taken care of and looked after.

I propose that we start on Thursday morning, the 1st of November. The train for Penzance leaves the Great Western terminus at a quarter-past nine in the morning. It is a twelve hours' journey. Shall we meet at the terminus at nine? I shall be here all the previous day, and shall dine here.

Your account of your passage goes to my heart through my stomach. What a pity I was not there on board to present that green-visaged, but sweet-tempered and uncomplaining spectacle of imbecility, at which I am so expert under stormy circumstances, in the poet's phrase:

As I sweep
Through the deep,
When the stormy winds do blow.

What a pity I am not there, at Meurice's, to sleep the sleep of infancy through the long plays where the gentlemen stand with their backs to the mantelpieces. What a pity I am not with you to make a third at the Trois Frères, and drink no end of bottles of Bordeaux, without ever getting a touch of redness in my (poet's phrase again) "innocent nose." But I must go down

to Gad's to-night, and get to work again. Four weekly numbers have been ground off the wheel, and at least another must be turned before we meet. They shall be yours in the slumberous railway-carriage.

I don't think Forster is at all in good health. He was tremendously hospitable and hearty. I walked six hours and a half on the downs yesterday, and never stopped or sat. Early in the morning, before breakfast, I went to the nearest baths to get a shower-bath. They kept me waiting longer than I thought reasonable, and seeing a man in a cap in the passage, I went to him and said: "I really must request that you'll be good enough to see about this shower-bath;" and it was Hullah! waiting for another bath.

Rumours were brought into the house on Saturday night, that there was a "ghost" up at Larkins's monument. Plorn was frightened to death, and I was apprehensive of the ghost's spreading and coming there, and causing "warning" and desertion among the servants. Frank was at home, and Andrew Gordon was with us. Time, nine o'clock. Village talk and credulity, amazing. I armed the two boys with a short stick apiece, and shouldered my double-barrelled gun, well loaded with shot. "Now observe," says I to the domestics, "if anybody is playing tricks and has got a head, I'll blow it off." Immense impression. New groom evidently convinced that he has entered the service of a bloodthirsty demon. We ascend to the monument. Stop at the gate. Moon is rising. Heavy shadows. "Now, look out!" (from the bloodthirsty demon, in a loud, distinct voice). "If the ghost is here and I see him, so help me God I'll fire at him!" Suddenly, as we enter the field, a most extraordinary noise responds

—terrific noise—human noise—and yet superhuman noise. B. T. D. brings piece to shoulder. “Did you hear that, pa?” says Frank. “I did,” says I. Noise repeated—portentous, derisive, dull, dismal, damnable. We advance towards the sound. Something white comes lumbering through the darkness. An asthmatic sheep! Dead, as I judge, by this time. Leaving Frank to guard him, I took Andrew with me, and went all round the monument, and down into the ditch, and examined the field well, thinking it likely that somebody might be taking advantage of the sheep to frighten the village. Drama ends with discovery of no one, and triumphant return to rum-and-water.

Ever affectionately.

BIDEFORD, NORTH DEVON, *Thursday Night, Nov. 1st, 1860.*

Miss
Hogarth.

MY DEAREST GEORGY,

I write (with the most impracticable iron pen on earth) to report our safe arrival here, in a beastly hotel. We start to-morrow morning at nine on a two days' posting between this and Liskeard in Cornwall. We are due in Liskeard (but nobody seems to know anything about the roads) on Saturday afternoon, and we purpose making an excursion in that neighbourhood on Sunday, and coming up from Liskeard on Monday by Great Western fast train, which will get us to London, please God, in good time on Monday evening. There I shall hear from you, and know whether dear Mamie will move to London too.

We had a pleasant journey down here, and a beautiful day. No adventures whatever. Nothing has happened to Wilkie, and he sends love.

We had stinking fish for dinner, and have been

able to drink nothing, though we have ordered wine, beer, and brandy-and-water. There is nothing in the house but two tarts and a pair of snuffers. The landlady is playing cribbage with the landlord in the next room (behind a thin partition), and they seem quite comfortable.

Ever, my dearest Georgy, your most affectionate.

Miss Mary
Boyle.

OFFICE OF "ALL THE YEAR ROUND,"

Friday, Dec. 28th, 1860.

MY DEAR MARY,

I cannot tell you how much I thank you for the beautiful cigar-case, and how seasonable, and friendly, and good, and warm-hearted it looked when I opened it at Gad's Hill. Besides which, it is a cigar-case, and will hold cigars; two crowning merits that I never yet knew to be possessed by any article claiming the same name. For all of these reasons, but more than all because it comes from you, I love it, and send you eighteen hundred and sixty kisses, with one in for the new year.

Both excellent stories and perfectly new. Your Joe swears that he never heard either—never a word or syllable of either—afore he laughed at 'em this blessed day.

I have no news, except that I am not quite well, and am being doctored. Pray read "Great Expectations." I think it is very droll. It is a very great success, and seems universally liked. I suppose because it opens funnily, and with an interest too.

I pass my time here (I am staying here alone) in working, taking physic, and taking a stall at a theatre every night. On Boxing Night I was at Covent Garden. A dull pantomime was "worked" (as we say)

better than I ever saw a heavy piece worked on a first night, until suddenly and without a moment's warning, every scene on that immense stage fell over on its face, and disclosed chaos by gaslight behind! There never was such a business; about sixty people who were on the stage being extinguished in the most remarkable manner. Not a soul was hurt. In the uproar, some moon-calf rescued a porter pot, six feet high (out of which the clown had been drinking when the accident happened), and stood it on the cushion of the lowest proscenium box, P.S., beside a lady and gentleman, who were dreadfully ashamed of it. The moment the house knew that nobody was injured, they directed their whole attention to this gigantic porter pot in its genteel position (the lady and gentleman trying to hide behind it), and roared with laughter. When a modest footman came from behind the curtain to clear it, and took it up in his arms like a Brobdingnagian baby, we all laughed more than ever we had laughed in our lives. I don't know why.

We have had a fire here, but our people put it out before the parish-engine arrived, like a drivelling perambulator, with *the beadle in it*, like an imbecile baby. Popular opinion, disappointed in the fire having been put out, snowballed the beadle. God bless it!

Over the way at the Lyceum, there is a very fair Christmas piece, with one or two uncommonly well-done nigger songs—one remarkably gay and mad, done in the finale to a scene. Also a very nice transformation, though I don't know what it means.

The poor actors waylay me in Bow Street, to represent their necessities; and I often see one cut down a court when he beholds me coming, cut round Drury

Lane to face me, and come up towards me near this door in the freshest and most accidental way, as if I was the last person he expected to see on the surface of this globe. The other day, there thus appeared before me (simultaneously with a scent of rum in the air) one aged and greasy man, with a pair of pumps under his arm. He said he thought if he could get down to somewhere (I think it was Newcastle), he would get "taken on" as Pantaloon, the existing Pantaloon being "a stick, sir—a mere muff." I observed that I was sorry times were so bad with him. "Mr. Dickens, you know our profession, sir—no one knows it better, sir—there is no right feeling in it. I was Harlequin on your own circuit, sir, for five-and thirty years, and was displaced by a boy, sir!—a boy!"

So no more at present, except love to Mrs. Watson and Bedgey Prig and all, from my dear Mary.

Your ever affectionate

JOE.

P.S.—DON'T I pine neither?

P.P.S.—I did my best to arouse Forster's worst feelings; but he had got into a Christmas habit of mind, and wouldn't respond.

NARRATIVE.

1861.

THIS, as far as his movements were concerned, was again a very unsettled year with Charles Dickens. He hired a furnished house in the Regent's Park, which he, with his household, occupied for some months. During the season he gave several readings at St. James's Hall. After a short summer holiday at Gad's Hill, he

started, in the autumn, on a reading tour in the English provinces. Mr. Arthur Smith, being seriously ill, could not accompany him in this tour; and Mr. Headland, who was formerly in office at the St. Martin's Hall, was engaged as business-manager of these readings. Mr. Arthur Smith died in October, and Charles Dickens's distress at the loss of this loved friend and companion is touchingly expressed in many of his letters of this year.

There are also sorrowful allusions to the death of his brother-in-law, Mr. Henry Austin, which sad event likewise happened in October. And the letter we give to Mrs. Austin ("Letitia") has reference to her sad affliction.

In June of this year he paid a short visit to Sir E. B. Lytton at Knebworth, accompanied by his daughter and sister-in-law, who also during his autumn tour joined him in Edinburgh. But this course of readings was brought rather suddenly to an end on account of the death of the Prince Consort.

Besides being constantly occupied with the business of these readings, Charles Dickens was still at work on his story of "Great Expectations," which was appearing weekly in "All the Year Round." The story closed on the 3rd of August, when it was published as a whole in three volumes, and inscribed to Mr. Chauncey Hare Townshend. The Christmas number of "All the Year Round" was called "Tom Tiddler's Ground," to which Charles Dickens contributed three stories.

Our second letter in this year is given more as a specimen of the claims which were constantly being made upon Charles Dickens's time and patience, than

because we consider the letter itself to contain much public interest; excepting, indeed, as showing his always considerate and courteous replies to such constant applications.

"The fire" mentioned in the letter to Mr. Forster was the great fire in Tooley Street. The "Morgan" was an American sea-captain, well known in those days, and greatly liked and respected. It may interest our readers to know that the character of Captain Jorgan, in the Christmas number of the previous year, was suggested by this pleasant sailor, for whom Charles Dickens had a hearty liking. Young Mr. Morgan was, during the years he passed in England, a constant visitor at Gad's Hill. The "Elwin" mentioned in the letter written from Bury St. Edmunds, was the Rev. Whitwell Elwin, a Norfolk gentleman, well known in the literary world, and who was for many years editor of "The Quarterly Review."

The explanation of the letter to Mr. John Agate, of Dover, we give in that gentleman's own words:

"There are few public men with the strain upon their time and energies which he had particularly (and which I know better now that I have read his life), who would have spared the time to have written such a long courteous letter.

"I wrote to him rather in anger, and left the letter myself at The Lord Warden, as I and my family were very much disappointed, after having purchased our tickets so long before, to find we could not get into the room, as money was being received, but his kind letter explained all."

OFFICE OF "ALL THE YEAR ROUND,"

*Wednesday, Jan. 9th, 1861.*Miss
Hogarth.

MY DEAREST GEORGY,

"We" are in the full swing of stopping managers from playing "A Message from the Sea." I privately doubt the strength of our position in the Court of Chancery, if we try it; but it is worth trying.

I am aware that Mr. Lane of the Britannia sent an emissary to Gad's Hill yesterday. It unfortunately happens that the first man "we" have to assert the principle against is a very good man, whom I really respect.

I have no news, except that I really hope and believe I am gradually getting well. If I have no check, I hope to be soon discharged by the medico.

Ever affectionately.

P.S.—Best love to Mamie, also to the boys and Miss Craufurd.

OFFICE OF "ALL THE YEAR ROUND," 26, WELLINGTON STREET, W.C.,

Tuesday Evening, Jan. 9th, 1861.

DEAR SIR,

I feel it quite hopeless to endeavour to present my position before you, in reference to such a letter as yours, in its plain and true light. When you suppose it would have cost Mr. Thackeray "but a word" to use his influence to obtain you some curatorship or the like, you fill me with the sense of impossibility of leading you to a more charitable judgment of Mr. Dickens.

Nevertheless, I will put the truth before you. Scarcely a day of my life passes, or has passed for many years, without bringing me some letters similar to yours. Often they will come by dozens—scores—hundreds. My time and attention would be pretty well occupied without them, and the claims upon me (some very near home), for all the influence and means of help that I do and do not possess, are not commonly heavy. I have no power to aid you towards the attainment of your object. It is the simple exact truth, and nothing can alter it. So great is the disquietude I constantly undergo from having to write to some new correspondent in this strain, that, God knows, I would resort to another relief if I could.

Your studies from nature appear to me to express an excellent observation of nature, in a loving and healthy spirit. But what then? The dealers and dealers' prices of which you complain will not be influenced by that honest opinion. Nor will it have the least effect upon the President of the Royal Academy, or the Directors of the School of Design. Assuming your supposition to be correct that these authorities are adverse to you, I have no more power than you have to render them favourable. And assuming them to be quite disinterested and dispassionate towards you, I have no voice or weight in any appointment that any of them make.

I will retain your packet over to-morrow, and will then cause it to be sent to your house. I write under the pressure of occupation and business, and therefore write briefly.

Faithfully yours.

OFFICE OF "ALL THE YEAR ROUND," *Friday, Feb. 1st, 1861.*M. de
Cerjat.

MY DEAR CERJAT,

You have read in the papers of our heavy English frost. At Gad's Hill it was so intensely cold, that in our warm dining-room on Christmas Day we could hardly sit at the table. In my study on that morning, long after a great fire of coal and wood had been lighted, the thermometer was I don't know where below freezing. The bath froze, and all the pipes froze, and remained in a stony state for five or six weeks. The water in the bedroom-jugs froze, and blew up the crockery. The snow on the top of the house froze, and was imperfectly removed with axes. My beard froze as I walked about, and I couldn't detach my cravat and coat from it until I was thawed at the fire. My boys and half the officers stationed at Chatham skated away without a check to Gravesend—five miles off—and repeated the performance for three or four weeks. At last the thaw came, and then everything split, blew up, dripped, poured, perspired, and got spoilt. Since then we have had a small visitation of the plague of servants; the cook (in a riding-habit) and the groom (in a dress-coat and jewels) having mounted Mary's horse and mine, in our absence, and scoured the neighbouring country at a rattling pace. And when I went home last Saturday, I innocently wondered how the horses came to be out of condition, and gravely consulted the said groom on the subject, who gave it as his opinion "which they wanted reg'lar work." We are now coming to town until midsummer. Having sold my own house, to be more free and independent, I have taken a very pretty furnished house, No. 3,

Hanover Terrace, Regent's Park. This, of course, on my daughter's account. For I have very good and cheerful bachelor rooms here, with an old servant in charge, who is the cleverest man of his kind in the world, and can do anything, from excellent carpentry to excellent cookery, and has been with me three-and-twenty years.

The American business is the greatest English sensation at present. I venture to predict that the struggle of violence will be a very short one, and will be soon succeeded by some new compact between the Northern and Southern States. Meantime the Lancashire mill-owners are getting very uneasy.

The Italian state of things is not regarded as looking very cheerful. What from one's natural sympathies with a people so oppressed as the Italians, and one's natural antagonism to a pope and a Bourbon (both of which superstitions I do suppose the world to have had more than enough of), I agree with you concerning Victor Emmanuel, and greatly fear that the Southern Italians are much degraded. Still, an united Italy would be of vast importance to the peace of the world, and would be a rock in Louis Napoleon's way, as he very well knows. Therefore the idea must be championed, however much against hope.

My eldest boy, just home from China, was descried by Townshend's Henri the moment he landed at Marseilles, and was by him borne in triumph to Townshend's rooms. The weather was snowy, slushy, beastly; and Marseilles was, as it usually is to my thinking, well-nigh intolerable. My boy could not stay with Townshend, as he was coming on by express train; but he says: "I sat with him and saw him dine. He

had a leg of lamb, and a tremendous cold." That is the whole description I have been able to extract from him.

This journal is doing gloriously, and "Great Expectations" is a great success. I have taken my third boy, Frank (Jeffrey's godson), into this office. If I am not mistaken, he has a natural literary taste and capacity, and may do very well with a chance so congenial to his mind, and being also entered at the Bar.

Dear me, when I have to show you about London, and we dine *en garçon* at odd places, I shall scarcely know where to begin. Only yesterday I walked out from here in the afternoon, and thought I would go down by the Houses of Parliament. When I got there, the day was so beautifully bright and warm, that I thought I would walk on by Millbank, to see the river. I walked straight on *for three miles* on a splendid broad esplanade overhanging the Thames, with immense factories, railway works, and what-not erected on it, and with the strangest beginnings and ends of wealthy streets pushing themselves into the very Thames. When I was a rower on that river, it was all broken ground and ditch, with here and there a public-house or two, an old mill, and a tall chimney. I had never seen it in any state of transition, though I suppose myself to know this rather large city as well as anyone in it.

* * * * *

3, HANOVER TERRACE, REGENT'S PARK,

Saturday Night, March 9th, 1861.

Mr. E. M.
Ward, R.A.

MY DEAR WARD,

I cannot tell you how gratified I have been by your letter, and what a splendid recompense it is for

any pleasure I am giving you. Such generous and earnest sympathy from such a brother-artist gives me true delight. I am proud of it, believe me, and moved by it to do all the better.

Ever faithfully yours.

Mr. W. C.
Macready.

"ALL THE YEAR ROUND" OFFICE, *Tuesday, June 11th, 1861.*

MY DEAREST MACREADY,

There is little doubt, I think, of my reading at Cheltenham somewhere about November. I submit myself so entirely to Arthur Smith's arrangements for me, that I express my sentiments on this head with modesty. But I think there is scarcely a doubt of my seeing you then.

I have just finished my book of "Great Expectations," and am the worse for wear. Neuralgic pains in the face have troubled me a good deal, and the work has been pretty close. But I hope that the book is a good book, and I have no doubt of very soon throwing off the little damage it has done me.

What with Blondin at the Crystal Palace and Leotard at Leicester Square, we seem to be going back to barbaric excitements. I have not seen, and don't intend to see, the Hero of Niagara (as the posters call him), but I have been beguiled into seeing Leotard, and it is at once the most fearful and most graceful thing I have ever seen done.

Clara White (grown pretty) has been staying with us.

I am sore afraid that *The Times*, by playing fast and loose with the American question, has very seriously compromised this country. The Americans northward are perfectly furious on the subject; and Motley the historian (a very sensible man, strongly English in

his sympathies) assured me the other day that he thought the harm done very serious indeed, and the dangerous nature of the daily widening breach scarcely calculable.

Kindest and best love to all. Wilkie Collins has just come in, and sends best regard.

Ever most affectionately, my dearest Macready.

GAD'S HILL, *Monday, July 1st, 1861.* Mr. John Forster.

MY DEAR FORSTER,

* * * * *

You will be surprised to hear that I have changed the end of "Great Expectations" from and after Pip's return to Joe's, and finding his little likeness there.

Bulwer (who has been, as I think I told you, extraordinarily taken by the book), so strongly urged it upon me, after reading the proofs, and supported his views with such good reasons, that I resolved to make the change. You shall have it when you come back to town. I have put in a very pretty piece of writing, and I have no doubt the story will be more acceptable through the alteration.

I have not seen Bulwer's changed story. I brought back the first month with me, and I know the nature of his changes throughout; but I have not yet had the revised proofs. He was in a better state at Knebworth than I have ever seen him in all these years, a little weird occasionally regarding magic and spirits, but perfectly fair and frank under opposition. He was talkative, anecdotal, and droll; looked young and well, laughed heartily, and enjoyed some games we played with great zest. In his artist character and talk he was full of interest and matter, but that he always

is. Socially, he seemed to me almost a new man. I thoroughly enjoyed myself, and so did Georgina and Mary.

The fire I did not see until the Monday morning, but it was blazing fiercely then, and was blazing hardly less furiously when I came down here again last Friday. I was here on the night of its breaking out. If I had been in London I should have been on the scene, pretty surely.

You will be perhaps surprised to hear that it is Morgan's conviction (his son was here yesterday), that the North will put down the South, and that speedily. In his management of his large business, he is proceeding steadily on that conviction. He says that the South has no money and no credit, and that it is impossible for it to make a successful stand. He may be all wrong, but he is certainly a very shrewd man, and he has never been, as to the United States, an enthusiast of any class.

Poor Lord Campbell's seems to me as easy and good a death as one could desire. There must be a sweep of these men very soon, and one feels as if it must fall out like the breaking of an arch—one stone goes from a prominent place, and then the rest begin to drop. So one looks towards Brougham, and Lyndhurst, and Pollock.

I will add no more to this, or I know I shall not send it; for I am in the first desperate laziness of having done my book, and think of offering myself to the village school as a live example of that vice for the edification of youth.

Ever, my dear Forster, affectionately.

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,

*Monday, July 8th, 1861.*The Hon.
Mrs.
Watson.

MY DEAR MRS. WATSON,

I have owed you a letter for so long a time that I fear you may sometimes have misconstrued my silence. But I hope that the sight of the handwriting of your old friend will undeceive you, if you have, and will put that right.

During the progress of my last story, I have been working so hard that very, very little correspondence—except enforced correspondence on business—has passed this pen. And now that I am free again, I devote a few of my first leisure moments to this note.

You seemed in your last to think that I had forgotten you in respect of the Christmas number. Not so at all. I discussed with them here where you were, how you were to be addressed, and the like; finally left the number in a blank envelope, and did not add the address to it until it would have been absurd to send you such stale bread. This was my fault, but this was all. And I should be so pained at heart if you supposed me capable of failing in my truth and cordiality, or in the warm remembrance of the time we have passed together, that perhaps I make more of it than you meant to do.

My sailor-boy is at home—I was going to write, for the holidays, but I suppose I must substitute “on leave.” Under the new regulations, he must not pass out of the *Britannia* before December. The younger boys are all at school, and coming home this week for the holidays. Mary keeps house, of course, and Katie and her husband surprised us yesterday, and are here

now. Charley is holiday-making at Guernsey and Jersey. He has been for some time seeking a partnership in business, and has not yet found one. The matter is in the hands of Mr. Bates, the managing partner in Barings' house, and seems as slow a matter to adjust itself as ever I looked on at. Georgina is, as usual, the general friend and confidante and factotum of the whole party.

Your present correspondent read at St. James's Hall in the beginning of the season, to perfectly astounding audiences; but finding that fatigue and excitement very difficult to manage in conjunction with a story, deemed it prudent to leave off reading in high tide and mid-career, the rather by reason of something like neuralgia in the face. At the end of October I begin again; and if you are at Brighton in November, I shall try to see you there. I deliver myself up to Mr. Arthur Smith, and I know it is one of the places for which he has put me down.

This is all about me and mine, and next I want to know why you never come to Gad's Hill, and whether you are never coming. The stress I lay on these questions you will infer from the size of the following note of interrogation?

I am in the constant receipt of news from Lausanne. Of Mary Boyle, I daresay you have seen and heard more than I have lately. Rumours occasionally reach me of her acting in every English shire incessantly, and getting in a harvest of laurels all the year round. Cavendish I have not seen for a long time, but when I did see him last, it was at Tavistock House, and we dined together jovially. Mention of that locality reminds me that when you DO come here, you

will see the pictures looking wonderfully better, and more precious than they ever did in town. Brought together in country light and air, they really are quite a baby collection and very pretty.

I direct this to Rockingham, supposing you to be there in this summer time. If you are as leafy in Northamptonshire as we are in Kent, you are greener than you have been for some years. I hope you may have seen a large-headed photograph with little legs, representing the undersigned, pen in hand, tapping his forehead to knock an idea out. It has just sprung up so abundantly in all the shops, that I am ashamed to go about town looking in at the picture-windows, which is my delight. It seems to me extraordinarily ludicrous, and much more like than the grave portrait done in earnest. It made me laugh when I first came upon it, until I shook again, in open sunlighted Piccadilly.

Pray be a good Christian to me, and don't be retributive in measuring out the time that shall pass before you write to me. And believe me ever,

Your affectionate and faithful.

OFFICE OF "ALL THE YEAR ROUND,"

Wednesday, Aug. 28th, 1861.

Mr W.
Wilkie
Collins.

MY DEAR WILKIE,

I have been going to write to you ever since I received your letter from Whitby, and now I hear from Charley that you are coming home, and must be addressed in the Rue Harley. Let me know whether you will dine here this day week at the usual five. I am at present so addle-headed (having hard Wednesday work in Wills's absence) that I can't write much.

I have got the "Copperfield" reading ready for delivery, and am now going to blaze away at "Nickleby," which I don't like half as well. Every morning I "go in" at these marks for two or three hours, and then collapse and do nothing whatever (counting as nothing much cricket and rounders).

In my time that curious railroad by the Whitby Moor was so much the more curious, that you were balanced against a counter-weight of water, and that you did it like Blondin. But in these remote days the one inn of Whitby was up a back-yard, and oyster-shell grottoes were the only view from the best private room. Likewise, sir, I have posted to Whitby. "Pity the sorrows of a poor old man."

The sun is glaring in at these windows with an amount of ferocity insupportable by one of the landed interest, who lies upon his back with an imbecile hold on grass, from lunch to dinner. Feebleness of mind and head are the result.

Ever affectionately.

P.S.—The boys have multiplied themselves by fifty daily, and have seemed to appear in hosts (especially in the hottest days) round all the corners at Gad's Hill. I call them the prowlers, and each has a distinguishing name attached, derived from his style of prowling.

Mr. Arthur
Smith.

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,

Tuesday, Sept. 3rd, 1861.

MY DEAR ARTHUR,

I cannot tell you how sorry I am to receive your bad account of your health, or how anxious I shall be

to receive a better one as soon as you can possibly give it.

If you go away, don't you think in the main you would be better here than anywhere? You know how well you would be nursed, what care we should take of you, and how perfectly quiet and at home you would be, until you become strong enough to take to the Medway. Moreover, I think you would be less anxious about the tour, here, than away from such association. I would come to Worthing to fetch you, I needn't say, and would take the most careful charge of you. I will write no more about this, because I wish to avoid giving you more to read than can be helped; but I do sincerely believe it would be at once your wisest and least anxious course. As to a long journey into Wales, or any long journey, it would never do. Nice is not to be thought of. Its dust, and its sharp winds (I know it well), towards October are very bad indeed.

I send you the enclosed letters, firstly, because I have no circular to answer them with, and, secondly because I fear I might confuse your arrangements by interfering with the correspondence. I shall hope to have a word from you very soon. I am at work for the tour every day, except my town Wednesdays.

Ever faithfully.

P.S.—Kindest regards from all.

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,

Saturday Night, Sept. 28th, 1861.

Mr. John
Watkins.

DEAR MR. WATKINS,

In reply to your kind letter I must explain that I have not yet brought down any of your large photo-

graphs of myself, and therefore cannot report upon their effect here. I think the "cartes" are all liked.

A general howl of horror greeted the appearance of No. 18, and a riotous attempt was made to throw it out of window. I calmed the popular fury by promising that it should never again be beheld within these walls. I think I mentioned to you when you showed it to me, that I felt persuaded it would not be liked. It has a grim and wasted aspect, and perhaps might be made useful as a portrait of the Ancient Mariner.

I feel that I owe you an apology for being (innocently) a difficult subject. When I once excused myself to Ary Scheffer while sitting to him, he received the apology as strictly his due, and said with a vexed air: "At this moment, *mon cher* Dickens, you look more like an energetic Dutch admiral than anything else;" for which I apologised again.

In the hope that the pains you have bestowed upon me will not be thrown away, but that your success will prove of some use to you, believe me,

Faithfully yours.

Mr.
Edmund
Yates.

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,

Sunday, Oct. 6th, 1861.

AFTER THE DEATH OF MR. ARTHUR SMITH.

MY DEAR EDMUND,

Coming back here to-day, I find your letter.

I was so very much distressed last night in thinking of it all, and I find it so very difficult to preserve my composure when I dwell in my mind on the many times fast approaching when I shall sorely miss the familiar face, that I am hardly steady enough yet to refer to the readings like a man. But your kind re-

ference to them makes me desirous to tell you that I took Headland (formerly of St. Martin's Hall, who has always been with us in London) to conduct the business, when I knew that our poor dear fellow could never do it, even if he had recovered strength to go; and that I consulted with himself about it when I saw him for the last time on earth, and that it seemed to please him, and he said: "We couldn't do better."

Write to me before you come; and remember that I go to town Wednesday mornings.

Ever faithfully.

OFFICE OF "ALL THE YEAR ROUND,"

Thursday, Oct. 10th, 1861.

Miss
Dickens.

MY DEAREST MAMIE,

I received your affectionate little letter here this morning, and was very glad to get it. Poor dear Arthur is a sad loss to me, and indeed I was very fond of him. But the readings must be fought out, like all the rest of life.

Ever your affectionate.

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,

Sunday, Oct. 13th, 1861.

Mr. W. C.
Macready.

MY DEAREST MACREADY,

This is a short note. But the moment I know for certain what is designed for me at Cheltenham, I write to you in order that you may know it from me and not by chance from anyone else.

I am to read there on the evening of Friday, the 3rd of January, and on the morning of Saturday, the 4th; as I have nothing to do on Thursday, the 2nd, but come from Leamington, I shall come to you, please God, for a quiet dinner that day.

The death of Arthur Smith has caused me great distress and anxiety. I had a great regard for him, and he made the reading part of my life as light and pleasant as it *could* be made. I had hoped to bring him to see you, and had pictured to myself how amused and interested you would have been with his wonderful tact and consummate mastery of arrangement. But it's all over.

I begin at Norwich on the 28th, and am going north in the middle of November. I am going to do "Copperfield," and shall be curious to test its effect on the Edinburgh people. It has been quite a job so to piece portions of the long book together as to make something continuous out of it; but I hope I have got something varied and dramatic. I am also (not to slight *your* book) going to do "Nickleby at Mr. Squeers's." It is clear that both must be trotted out at Cheltenham.

With kindest love and regard to all your house,
Ever, my dearest Macready, your most affectionate.

P.S.—Fourth edition of "Great Expectations" almost gone!

Miss
Hogarth.

ANGEL HOTEL, BURY ST. EDMUNDS,

Wednesday, Oct. 13th, 1861.

MY DEAREST GEORGY,

I have just now received your welcome letter, and I hasten to report (having very little time) that we had a splendid hall last night, and that I think "Nickleby" tops all the readings. Somehow it seems to have got in it, by accident, exactly the qualities best suited to the purpose, and it went last night not only with roars,

but with a general hilarity and pleasure that I have never seen surpassed.

We are full here for to-night.

Fancy this: last night at about six, who should walk in but Elwin! He was exactly in his usual state, only more demonstrative than ever, and had been driven in by some neighbours who were coming to the reading. I had tea up for him, and he went down at seven with me to the dismal den where I dressed, and sat by the fire while I dressed, and was childishly happy in that great privilege! During the reading he sat on a corner of the platform and roared incessantly. He brought in a lady and gentleman to introduce while I was undressing, and went away in a perfect and absolute rapture.

ROYAL HOTEL, NORWICH, *Tuesday, Oct. 29th, 1861.*

Miss
Hogarth.

I cannot say that we began well last night. We had not a good hall, and they were a very lumpish audience indeed. This did not tend to cheer the strangeness I felt in being without Arthur, and I was not at all myself. We have a large let for to-night, I think two hundred and fifty stalls, which is very large, and I hope that both they and I will go better. I could have done perfectly last night, if the audience had been bright, but they were an intent and staring audience. They laughed though very well, and the storm made them shake themselves again. But they were not magnetic, and the great big place was out of sorts somehow.

To-morrow I will write you another short note, however short. It is "Nickleby" and the "Trial" to-night; "Copperfield" again to-morrow. A wet day

here, with glimpses of blue. I shall not forget Katey's health at dinner. A pleasant journey down.

Ever, my dearest Georgy, your most affectionate.

Miss
Hogarth.

THE GREAT WHITE HORSE, IPSWICH, *Friday, Nov. 1st, 1861.*

I cannot quite remember in the whirl of travelling and reading, whether or no I wrote you a line from Bury St. Edmunds. But I think (and hope) I did. We had a fine room there, and "Copperfield" made a great impression. At mid-day we go on to Colchester, where I shall expect the young Morgans. I sent a telegram on yesterday, after receiving your note, to secure places for them. The answer returned by telegraph was: "No box-seats left but on the fourth row." If they prefer to sit on the stage (for I read in the theatre, there being no other large public room), they shall. Meantime I have told John, who went forward this morning with the other men, to let the people at the inn know that if three travellers answering that description appear before my dinner-time, they are to dine with me.

Plorn's admission that he likes the school very much indeed, is the great social triumph of modern times.

I am looking forward to Sunday's rest at Gad's, and shall be down by the ten o'clock train from town. I miss poor Arthur dreadfully. It is scarcely possible to imagine how much. It is not only that his loss to me socially is quite irreparable, but that the sense I used to have of compactness and comfort about me while I was reading is quite gone. And when I come out for the ten minutes, when I used to find him always ready for me with something cheerful to say, it

is forlorn. I cannot but fancy, too, that the audience must miss the old speciality of a pervading gentleman.

Nobody I know has turned up yet except Elwin. I have had many invitations to all sorts of houses in all sorts of places, and have of course accepted them every one.

Love to Mamie, if she has come home, and to Bouncer, if *she* has come; also Marguerite, who I hope is by this time much better.

Ever, my dear Georgy, your most affectionate.

GAD'S HILL, *Sunday, Nov. 3rd, 1861.*

Mrs.
Henry
Austin.

EXTRACT.

I am heartily glad to hear that you have been out in the air, and I hope you will go again very soon and make a point of continuing to go. There is a soothing influence in the sight of the earth and sky, which God put into them for our relief when He made the world in which we are all to suffer, and strive, and die.

I will not fail to write to you from many points of my tour, and if you ever want to write to me you may be sure of a quick response, and may be certain that I am sympathetic and true.

Ever affectionately.

FOUNTAIN HOTEL, CANTERBURY, *Windy Night, Nov. 4th, 1861.*

Miss
Dickens.

MY DEAREST MAMIE,

A word of report before I go to bed. An excellent house to-night, and an audience positively perfect. The greatest part of it stalls, and an intelligent and delightful response in them, like the touch of a beauti-

ful instrument. "Copperfield" wound up in a real burst of feeling and delight.

Ever affectionately.

Mr. John
Agate.

LORD WARDEN HOTEL, DOVER, *Wednesday, Nov. 6th, 1861.*

SIR,

I am exceedingly sorry to find, from the letter you have addressed to me, that you had just cause of complaint in being excluded from my reading here last night. It will now and then unfortunately happen when the place of reading is small (as in this case), that some confusion and inconvenience arise from the local agents over-estimating, in perfect good faith and sincerity, the capacity of the room. Such a mistake, I am assured, was made last night; and thus all the available space was filled before the people in charge were at all prepared for that circumstance.

You may readily suppose that I can have no personal knowledge of the proceedings of the people in my employment at such a time. But I wish to assure you very earnestly, that they are all old servants, well acquainted with my principles and wishes, and that they are under the strongest injunction to avoid any approach to mercenary dealing; and to behave to all comers equally with as much consideration and politeness as they know I should myself display. The recent death of a much-regretted friend of mine, who managed this business for me, and on whom these men were accustomed to rely in any little difficulty, caused them (I have no doubt) to feel rather at a loss in your case. Do me the favour to understand that under any other circumstances you would, as a matter of course, have been provided with any places what-

ever that could be found, without the smallest reference to what you had originally paid. This is scanty satisfaction to you, but it is so strictly the truth, that yours is the first complaint of the kind I have ever received.

I hope to read in Dover again, but it is quite impossible that I can make any present arrangement for that purpose. Whenever I may return here, you may be sure I shall not fail to remember that I owe you a recompense for a disappointment. In the meanwhile I very sincerely regret it.

Faithfully yours.

BEDFORD HOTEL, BRIGHTON, *Thursday, Nov. 7th, 1861.*

Miss
Hogarth.

MY DEAR GEORGY,

* * * * *

The Duchess of Cambridge comes to-night to "Copperfield." The bad weather has not in the least touched us, and beyond all doubt a great deal of money has been left untaken at each place.

The storm was most magnificent at Dover. All the great side of The Lord Warden next the sea had to be emptied, the break of the sea was so prodigious, and the noise was so utterly confounding. The sea came in like a great sky of immense clouds, for ever breaking suddenly into furious rain. All kinds of wreck were washed in. Miss Birmingham and I saw, among other things, a very pretty brass-bound chest being thrown about like a feather. On Tuesday night, the unhappy Ostend packet could not get in, neither could she go back, and she beat about the Channel until noon yesterday. I saw her come in then, *with five men at the wheel*; such a picture of misery, as to

the crew (of passengers there were no signs), as you can scarcely imagine.

The effect at Hastings and at Dover really seems to have outdone the best usual impression, and at Dover they wouldn't go, but sat applauding like mad. The most delicate audience I have seen in any provincial place is Canterbury. The audience with the greatest sense of humour certainly is Dover. The people in the stalls set the example of laughing, in the most curiously unreserved way; and they really laughed when Squeers read the boys' letters, with such cordial enjoyment, that the contagion extended to me, for one couldn't hear them without laughing too.

So, thank God, all goes well, and the recompense for the trouble is in every way great. There is rather an alarming breakdown at Newcastle, in respect of all the bills having been, in some inscrutable way, lost on the road. I have resolved to send Berry there, with full powers to do all manner of things, early next week.

The amended route-list is not printed yet, because I am trying to get off Manchester and Liverpool; both of which I strongly doubt, in the present state of American affairs. Therefore I can't send it for Marguerite; but I can, and do, send her my love and God-speed. This is addressed to the office because I suppose you will be there to-morrow.

Ever affectionately.

The Earl of
Carlisle.

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,

November 15th, 1861.

MY DEAR LORD CARLISLE,

You knew poor Austin, and what his work was, and how he did it. If you have no private ob-

jection to signing the enclosed memorial (which will receive the right signatures before being presented), I think you will have no public objection. I shall be heartily glad if you can put your name to it, and shall esteem your doing so as a very kind service. Will you return the memorial under cover to Mr. Tom Taylor, at the Local Government Act Office, Whitehall? He is generously exerting himself in furtherance of it, and so delay will be avoided.

My dear Lord Carlisle, faithfully yours always.

GAD'S HILL PLACE, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,

Sunday, Nov. 17th, 1861.

Miss Mary
Boyle.

MY DEAR MARY,

I am perfectly enraptured with the quilt. It is one of the most tasteful, lively, elegant things I have ever seen; and I need not tell you that while it is valuable to me for its own ornamental sake, it is precious to me as a rainbow-hint of your friendship and affectionate remembrance.

Please God you shall see it next summer occupying its allotted place of state in my brand-new bedroom here. You shall behold it then, with all cheerful surroundings, the envy of mankind.

My readings have been doing absolute wonders. Your Duchess and Princess came to hear first "Nickleby" and the "Pickwick trial," then "Copperfield," at Brighton. I think they were pleased with me, and I am sure I was with them; for they are the very best audience one could possibly desire. I shall always have a pleasant remembrance of them.

On Wednesday I am away again for the longest part of my trip.

Yes, Mary dear, I must say that I like my Carton, and I have a faint idea sometimes that if I had acted him, I could have done something with his life and death.

Believe me, ever your affectionate and faithful

JOE.

Miss
Hogarth.

QUEEN'S HEAD, NEWCASTLE, *Friday, Nov. 22nd, 1861.*

I received your letter this morning, and grieve to report that the unlucky Headland has broken down most awfully!

First, as perhaps you remember, this is the place where the bills were "lost" for a week or two. The consequence has been that the agent could not announce all through the "Jenny Lind" time (the most important for announcing), and could but stand still and stare when people came to ask what I was going to read. Last night I read "Copperfield" to the most enthusiastic and appreciative audience imaginable, but in numbers about half what they might have been. To-night we shall have a famous house; but we might have had it last night too. To-morrow (knowing by this time what can, of a certainty, be done with "Copperfield"), I had, of course, given out "Copperfield" to be read again. Conceive my amazement and dismay when I find the printer to have announced "Little Dombey"!!! This, I declare, I had no more intention of reading than I had of reading an account of the solar system. And this, after a sensation last night, of a really extraordinary nature in its intensity and delight!

Says the unlucky Headland to this first head of misery: "Johnson's mistake" (Johnson being the printer).

Second, I read at Edinburgh for the first time—observe the day—*next Wednesday*. Jenny Lind's concert at Edinburgh is to-night. This morning comes a frantic letter from the Edinburgh agent. "I have no bills, no tickets; I lose all the announcement I would have made to hundreds upon hundreds of people to-night, all of the most desirable class to be well informed beforehand. I can't announce what Mr. Dickens is going to read; I can answer no question; I have, upon my responsibility, put a dreary advertisement into the papers announcing that he *is* going to read so many times, and that particulars will shortly be ready; and I stand bound hand and foot." "Johnson's mistake," says the unlucky Headland.

Of course, I know that the man who never made a mistake in poor Arthur's time is not likely to be always making mistakes now. But I have written by this post to Wills, to go to him and investigate. I have also detached Berry from here, and have sent him on by train at a few minutes' notice to Edinburgh, and then to Glasgow (where I have no doubt everything is wrong too). Glasgow we may save; Edinburgh I hold to be irretrievably damaged. If it can be picked up at all, it can only be at the loss of the two first nights, and by the expenditure of no end of spirits and force. And this is the harder, because it is impossible not to see that the last readings polished and prepared the audiences in general, and that I have not to work them up in any place where I

have been before, but that they start with a London intelligence, and with a respect and preparation for what they are going to hear.

I hope by the time you and Mamie come to me, we shall have got into some good method. I must take the thing more into my own hands and look after it from hour to hour. If such a thing as this Edinburgh business could have happened under poor Arthur, I really believe he would have fallen into a fit, or gone distracted. No one can ever know what he was but I who have been with him and without him. Headland is so anxious and so good-tempered that I cannot be very stormy with him; but it is the simple fact that he has no notion of the requirements of such work as this. Without him, and with a larger salary to Berry (though there are objections to the latter as *first* man), I could have done a hundred times better.

As Forster will have a strong interest in knowing all about the proceedings, perhaps you will send him this letter to read. There is no very tremendous harm, indeed, done as yet. At Edinburgh I KNOW what I can do with "Copperfield." I think it is not too much to say that for every one who does come to hear it on the first night, I can get back fifty on the second. And whatever can be worked up there will tell on Glasgow. Berry I shall continue to send on ahead, and I shall take nothing on trust and more as being done.

On Sunday morning at six, I have to start for Berwick. From Berwick, in the course of that day, I will write again; to Mamie next time.

With best love to her and Mrs. B.

QUEEN'S HEAD, NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE,

*Saturday, Nov. 23rd, 1861.*Miss
Dickens.

A most tremendous hall here last night; something almost terrible in the cram. A fearful thing might have happened. Suddenly, when they were all very still over SMike, my gas batten came down, and it looked as if the room was falling. There were three great galleries crammed to the roof, and a high steep flight of stairs, and a panic must have destroyed numbers of people. A lady in the front row of stalls screamed, and ran out wildly towards me, and for one instant there was a terrible wave in the crowd. I addressed that lady laughing (for I knew she was in sight of everybody there), and called out as if it happened every night, "There's nothing the matter, I assure you; don't be alarmed; pray sit down;" and she sat down directly, and there was a thunder of applause. It took some few minutes to mend, and I looked on with my hands in my pockets; for I think if I had turned my back for a moment there might still have been a move. My people were dreadfully alarmed, Boylett in particular, who I suppose had some notion that the whole place might have taken fire.

"But there stood the master," he did me the honour to say afterwards, in addressing the rest, "as cool as ever I see him a-lounging at a railway station."

A telegram from Berry at Edinburgh yesterday evening, to say that he had got the bills, and that they would all be up and dispersed yesterday evening under his own eyes. So no time was lost in setting

things as right as they can be set. He has now gone on to Glasgow.

P.S.—Duty to Mrs. Bouncer.

Miss
Hogarth.

BERWICK-ON-TWEED, *Monday, Nov. 25th, 1861.*

I write (in a gale of wind, with a high sea running), to let you know that we go on to Edinburgh at half-past eight to-morrow morning.

A most ridiculous room was designed for me in this odd out-of-the-way place. An immense Corn Exchange made of glass and iron, round, dome-topped, lofty, utterly absurd for any such purpose, and full of thundering echoes, with a little lofty crow's-nest of a stone gallery breast high, deep in the wall, into which it was designed to put *me!* I instantly struck, of course, and said I would either read in a room attached to this house (a very snug one, capable of holding five hundred people) or not at all. Terrified local agents glowered, but fell prostrate.

Berry has this moment come back from Edinburgh and Glasgow with hopeful accounts. He seems to have done the business extremely well, and he says that it was quite curious and cheering to see how the Glasgow people assembled round the bills the instant they were posted, and evidently with a great interest in them.

We left Newcastle yesterday morning in the dark, when it was intensely cold and froze very hard. So it did here. But towards night the wind went round to the S.W., and all night it has been blowing very hard indeed. So it is now.

Tell Mamie that I have the same sitting-room as

we had when we came here with poor Arthur, and that my bedroom is the room out of it which she and Katie had. Surely it is the oddest town to read in! But it is taken on poor Arthur's principle that a place in the way pays the expenses of a through journey; and the people would seem to be coming up to the scratch gallantly. It was a dull Sunday, though; O it *was* a dull Sunday, without a book! For I had forgotten to buy one at Newcastle, until it was too late. So after dark I made a jug of whisky-punch, and drowned the unlucky Headland's remembrance of his failures.

I shall hope to hear very soon that the workmen have "broken through," and that you have been in the state apartments, and that upholstery measurements have come off.

There has been a horrible accident in Edinburgh. One of the seven-storey old houses in the High Street fell when it was full of people. Berry was at the bill-poster's house, a few doors off, waiting for him to come home, when he heard what seemed like thunder, and then the air was darkened with dust, "as if an immense quantity of steam had been blown off," and then all that dismal quarter set up shrieks, which he says were most dreadful.

WATERLOO HOTEL, EDINBURGH, *Wednesday, Nov. 27th, 1861.* Miss Dickens.

Mrs. Bouncer must decidedly come with you to Carlisle. She shall be received with open arms. Apropos of Carlisle, let me know *when* you purpose coming there. We shall be there, please God, on the Saturday in good time, as I finish at Glasgow on the Friday night.

I have very little notion of the state of affairs here, as Headland brought no more decisive information from the agents yesterday (he never *can* get decisive information from any agents), than "the teeckets air joost moving reecht and left." I hope this may be taken as satisfactory. Jenny Lind carried off a world of money from here. Miss Glyn, or Mrs. Dallas, is playing Lady Macbeth at the theatre, and Mr. Shirley Brooks is giving two lectures at the Philosophical Society on the House of Commons and Horace Walpole. Grisi's farewell benefits are (I think) on my last two nights here.

Gordon dined with me yesterday. He is, if anything, rather better, I think, than when we last saw him in town. He was immensely pleased to be with me. I went with him (as his office goes anywhere) right into and among the ruins of the fallen building yesterday. They were still at work trying to find two men (brothers), a young girl, and an old woman, known to be all lying there. On the walls two or three common clocks are still hanging; one of them, judging from the time at which it stopped, would seem to have gone for an hour or so after the fall. Great interest had been taken in a poor linnet in a cage, hanging in the wind and rain high up against the broken wall. A fireman got it down alive, and great exultation had been raised over it. One woman, who was dug out unhurt, staggered into the street, stared all round her, instantly ran away, and has never been heard of since. It is a most extraordinary sight, and of course makes a great sensation.

WATERLOO HOTEL, EDINBURGH, *Friday, Nov. 29th, 1861.* Miss Dickens.

I think it is my turn to write to you, and I therefore send a brief despatch, like a telegram, to let you know that in a gale of wind and a fierce rain, last night, we turned away a thousand people. There was no getting into the hall, no getting near the hall, no stirring among the people, no getting out, no possibility of getting rid of them. And yet, in spite of all that, and of their being steaming wet, they never flagged for an instant, never made a complaint, and took up the trial upon their very shoulders, to the last word, in a triumphant roar.

The talk about "Copperfield" rings through the whole place. It is done again to-morrow night. To-morrow morning I read "Dombey." To-morrow morning is Grisi's "farewell" morning concert, and last night was her "farewell" evening concert. Neither she, nor Jenny Lind, nor anything, nor anybody seems to make the least effect on the draw of the readings.

I lunch with Blackwood to-day. He was at the reading last night; a capital audience. Young Blackwood has also called here. A very good young fellow, I think.

CARRICK'S ROYAL HOTEL, GLASGOW, *Tuesday, Dec. 3rd, 1861.* Miss Hogarth.

I send you by this post another *Scotsman*. From a paragraph in it, a letter, and an advertisement, you may be able to form some dim guess of the scene at Edinburgh last night. Such a pouring of hundreds into a place already full to the throat, such indescribable confusion, such a rending and tearing of

dresses, and yet such a scene of good humour on the whole. I never saw the faintest approach to it. While I addressed the crowd in the room, Gordon addressed the crowd in the street. Fifty frantic men got up in all parts of the hall and addressed me all at once. Other frantic men made speeches to the walls. The whole Blackwood family were borne in on the top of a wave, and landed with their faces against the front of the platform. I read with the platform crammed with people. I got them to lie down upon it, and it was like some impossible tableau or gigantic picnic; one pretty girl in full dress lying on her side all night, holding on to one of the legs of my table. It was the most extraordinary sight. And yet from the moment I began to the moment of my leaving off, they never missed a point, and they ended with a burst of cheers.

The confusion was decidedly owing to the local agents. But I think it may have been a little heightened by Headland's way of sending them the tickets to sell in the first instance.

Now, as I must read again in Edinburgh on Saturday night, your travelling arrangements are affected. So observe carefully (you and Mamie) all that I am going to say. It appears to me that the best course will be for you to come to *Edinburgh* on Saturday; taking the fast train from the Great Northern station at nine in the morning. This would bring you to the Waterloo at Edinburgh, at about nine or so at night, and I should be home at ten. We could then have a quiet Sunday in Edinburgh, and go over to Carlisle on the Monday morning.

The expenditure of lungs and spirits was (as you

may suppose) rather great last night, and to sleep well was out of the question; I am therefore rather fagged to-day. And as the hall in which I read to-night is a large one, I must make my letter a short one.

My people were torn to ribbons last night. They have not a hat among them, and scarcely a coat.

Give my love to Mamie. To her question, "Will there be war with America?" I answer, "Yes;" I fear the North to be utterly mad, and war to be unavoidable.

VICTORIA HOTEL, PRESTON, *Friday, Dec. 13th, 1861.* Mr. W. H. Wills.

MY DEAR WILLS,

The news of the Christmas number is indeed glorious, and nothing can look brighter or better than the prospects of the illustrious publication.

Both Carlisle and Lancaster have come out admirably, though I doubted both, as you did. But, unlike you, I always doubted this place. I do so still. It is a poor place at the best (you remember?), and the mills are working half time, and trade is very bad. The expenses, however, will be a mere nothing. The accounts from Manchester for to-morrow, and from Liverpool for the readings generally, are very cheering indeed.

The young lady who sells the papers at the station is just the same as ever. Has orders for to-night, and is coming "with a person." "*The person?*" said I. "Never *you* mind," said she.

I was so charmed with Robert Chambers's "Traditions of Edinburgh" (which I read *in* Edinburgh), that I was obliged to write to him and say so.

Glasgow finished nobly, and the last night in Edinburgh was signally successful and positively splendid.

Will you give my small Admiral, on his personal application, one sovereign? I have told him to come to you for that recognition of his meritorious services.

Ever faithfully.

Mr. W. H.
Wills.

ADELPHI HOTEL, LIVERPOOL, *Sunday, Dec. 15th, 1861.*

MY DEAR WILLS,

I sent you a telegram to-day, and I write before the answer has come to hand.

I have been very doubtful what to do here. We have a great let for to-morrow night. The Mayor recommends closing to-morrow, and going on on Tuesday and Wednesday, so does the town clerk, so do the agents. But I have a misgiving that they hardly understand what the public general sympathy with the Queen will be. Further, I feel personally that the Queen has always been very considerate and gracious to me, and I would on no account do anything that might seem unfeeling or disrespectful. I shall attach great weight, in this state of indecision, to your telegram.

A capital audience at Preston. Not a capacious room, but full. Great appreciation.

The scene at Manchester last night was really magnificent. I had had the platform carried forward to our "Frozen Deep" point, and my table and screen built in with a proscenium and room scenery. When I went in (there was a very fine hall), they applauded in the most tremendous manner; and the extent to which they were taken aback and taken by storm by "Copperfield" was really a thing to see.

The post closes early here on a Sunday, and I shall close this also without further reference to "a message from the" W. H. W. being probably on the road.

Radley is ill, and supposed to be fast declining, poor fellow. The house is crammed, the assizes on, and troops perpetually embarking for Canada, and their officers passing through the hotel.

kindest regards, ever faithfully.

GAD'S HILL, HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT,

Saturday, Dec. 28th, 1861.

Miss Mary
Boyle.

MY DEAR MARY,

On Monday (as you know) I am away again, but I am not sorry to see land and a little rest before me; albeit, these are great experiences of the public heart.

The little Admiral has gone to visit America in the *Orlando*, supposed to be one of the foremost ships in the Service, and the best found, best manned, and best officered that ever sailed from England. He went away much gamier than any giant, attended by a chest in which he could easily have stowed himself and a wife and family of his own proportions.

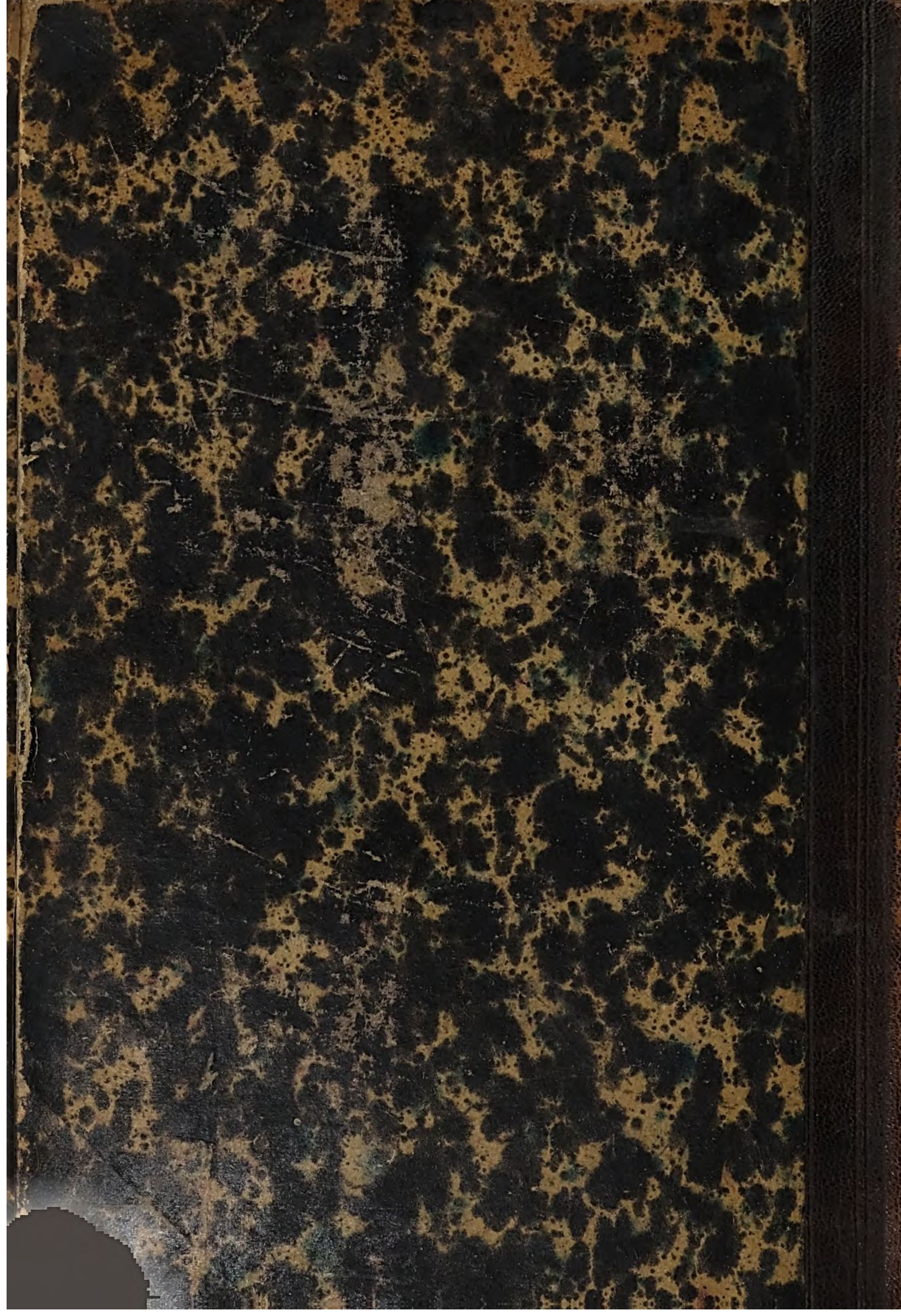
Ever and always, your affectionate

JOE.

END OF VOL. II.

PRINTING OFFICE OF THE PUBLISHER.

F. X. BEER
k. Hofbuchbind
MÜNCHEN
Ledererstr. 25



Dickens, Charles / Dickens, Mamie / Hogarth, Georgina

The letters of Charles Dickens

Bd.: 2

1880

P.o.angl. 93 ma-9,2

urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb11664071-4